To Be A Muslim

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All praises to Allah, and blessings and peace to His Messenger. This book is divided into two parts. The first part focuses on the characteristics that every single Muslim should portray in order to fulfill the conditions of being a Muslim in both belief and practice. Many people are Muslim by identity, because they were "born Muslim" from Muslim parents. They may not know what Islam really means or its requirements, and so may lead a very secular life. The purpose of this first part is to explain the responsibility of every Muslim to become a knowledgeable and true believer in Islam.

The second part of this book discusses the responsibility to become an activist for Islam and participate in the Islamic Movement. It explains the nature of this movement and its goals, philosophy, strategy, and tactics, as well as the desirable characteristics of it members.

The failure of various movements in the Islamic world, and especially in the Arab countries, result from a spiritual emptiness in these movements as well as in society generally. In such a situation the principles and institutions of Islam are forgotten. The westernized leaders and movements collapse when they encounter serious challenges. These leaders and movements and the systems of government and economics they try to impose have fallen because they lacked a solid base. They fell because they were artificial constructs copied from alien cultures and did not represent the Muslim community. Therefore they were rejected by it. This situation is comparable to a kidney transplant in a human body. Although the body is able to tolerate it painfully for a short period of time, eventually the kidney will be rejected and die.

When the sickness of the Muslim Ummah became acute few Muslims thought of building a new society on Islamic principles. Instead many tried to import manmade systems and principles, which looked good but really were grossly defective and so could be easily toppled and crushed.

The first stage in this process of adaptation was the introduction of monopoly capitalism. This poisoned the values of society and the economy and politics, and destroyed the Muslim identity, as a culture. This led to the devastating defeat of Islam in 1948.

Despite this bitter experience the Muslims remained prisoners of the jahili, or pagan systems, introduced from abroad. If the 1948 defeat was caused by following the Westerners, the 1967 defeat was caused by following the left-wing proletariat of European, especially Soviet socialism. Bewildered by its falsities, they succumbed to successive defeats, abandoned by their socialist allies.

These very painful experiences caused Muslims to lose hope in their governments and their empty promises. These unbearable experiences awakened them to a realization that all the international powers are united to crush them, both the capitalist West of Euro-America and the socialist West of Russia, both "rightists" and "leftists." Muslims are finally learning that the void in their own midst can never be filled by White House programs, Kremlin plans, the thought of Marx, and Lenin, or the principles of Che Guevara and Ho Chi Minh

The Muslim Ummah must recognize that Allah intends it to have its identity different from others, so that all peoples of the world may develop theirs by applying the universal din of truth and justice in personal and community life. Recognition of this Islamic identity is the first step for the Muslim Ummah to revolutionize the thought and politics of the world.

Contents

1. PART I

1.1. The Creed (Aqidah)

The first requirement for a person who has accepted Islam as his way of life is to understand and accept certain teachings or elements of knowledge that one can know only from revelation. These are called the creed or Aqidah. The correct Aqidah has been revealed by all the Prophets, but most precisely in the Qura'n and sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him). One learns the Aqidah as taught by the early generations of Muslims and by the great scholars who demonstrated their piety and true understanding about Islam.

The Aqidah of a Muslim may be differentiated into the following five beliefs: belief in Allah; the final judgement; revelation through angels, books and messengers; charity; and prayer, as described in Surah al-Baqarah, verse 177:

It is not piety that you turn your faces towards East or West – But truly pious is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; and spend of his substance, out of love for Him, upon his near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who ask, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage; and is steadfast in prayer, and gives regular charity; and (truly pious are) they who keep their promises whenever they promise, and are firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and in times of peril. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing.

*The small letter (s) used in this book after the Prophet's name stands for sall-allahu alayhi wa sallam (peace and blessings be upon him).

1.1.1. Allah

1. The Creator of the universe is Allah, the All-knowing, the Almighty, and the One who needs no help. This is also demonstrated by the beauty and complexity of this universe. The parts of the universe each need one another in order to ensure their existence and stability. A single part cannot exist without the others.

   Such a beautiful universe cannot come into existence without the design and sustenance of Allah the Almighty. Allah the Almighty has said:

   If there were, in the heavens and the earth, other gods besides Allah, there would have been confusion in both! But glory be to Allah, the Lord of the Throne; (Far Exalted is He) above what they attribute to Him. [Qur'an 21:22]

2. Allah created this world with a purpose, and everything in it has its own divinely ordained purpose. Allah has the attribute of completeness, so everything he does has purpose and coherence. Allah's purpose and goals for creating this world can be known only through His messengers or Words. Allah the Almighty has said:

   Did you then think that We had created you in jest, and that you would not be brought back to us (for account)? Therefore exalted be Allah, the King, the Reality: There is no god but He, the Lord of the Throne of Honour! [Qur'an 23:115-116]

3. The purpose of life in this world is to know, serve and worship Allah. Allah the Almighty has said:

   I have created jinns and men, that they may serve Me. No sustenance do I require of them, nor do I require that they should feed Me. For Allah is He who gives (all) sustenance, the Lord of Power, Steadfast (forever). [Qur'an 51:56-58]

4. The attributes of Allah are unlimited. The Qur'an mentions 99 attributes and many verses show the completeness of His uluhiyyah (godliness or worthiness to be worshipped). Among these attributes alqayyum (the self-subsisting), almuqaddam (the promoter. and albaqi (the eternal, as distinct from makhluk, or His creation. He has no son, no father, and no comparison. He does not need help from His creatures but His creatures do need help from Him. He is unique (al abid) in His being, attributes, work, and leadership. He is al 'alim (all-knowing), al hayy (the living), at wasi' (the all-embracing), and has many other attributes unknown to us).

1.1.2. Final judgement

1. Paradise is the reward for the obedient mumin (believer) and hell-fire is the punishment for disbelievers. Allah the Almighty has said:

   (When) some will be in the Paradise, and some in the blazing fire.'[Qur'an 42:7]

2. All members of mankind are able to do good and avoid evil through their effort and will, but one cannot do good without help and good fortune (taufiq) from Allah. Allah the Almighty has said:

   By the soul and the proportion and order given to it, and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right - truly he succeeds who purifies it, and he fails that corrupts it.[Qur'an 7-10]

   Every soul will be (held) in pledge for its deeds.[Qur'an 74:38]

3. One should remain close to Allah whether alone or not. Allah, the Almighty has said:

   Do you not see that Allah knows (all) that is in the heavens and on earth? There is not a secret consultation among three persons but He is the fourth among them nor between five but He is the sixth - nor between fewer nor more but He is in their midst, wheresoever they be, in the end will He tell the truth of their conduct, on the Day of Judgement. For Allah has full knowledge of all things.[Qur'an 58:7]

1.1.3. Revelation

1. Allah has sent His messengers with the Books of revelation so that all of mankind may know Allah, their purpose in this world, and their final destination.

   Prophet Muhammad (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) is the final prophet among the prophets that Allah has sent. He was helped and strengthened by Allah with the Qur'an, the only miracle that lasts forever.

2. Allah alone has the right to make laws. The Shari'ah or law of Allah cannot be overruled. A Muslim is limited to ijtehad or intellectual effort in deriving laws from the shari'ah Allah the Almighty has said:

   Whatever it be wherein you differ, the decision thereof is with Allah: Such is Allah my Lord: in Him I trust, and to Him I turn? [Qur'an 42:10]

3. Human traditions and the opinion of the earlier generations of Muslim scholars in ta'wil (interpretation of the Qur'an and hadith) are important. The ta'wil made by the scholars of the later generations should not cause bitter arguments between traditionalist and modernist groups.

1.1.4. Charity

One should love Allah so much that one's heart is always looking for Him. This love for Allah will impel one to good deeds, sacrifice, and struggle for His sake, so much so that one's attachment to this temporary world and to one's family cannot stop one from doing good deeds. He has said:

Say, if your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred, and nation or the wealth that you have gained, or the commerce in which you fear a decline, or the dwellings in which you delight - are dearer to you than Allah or His messenger and the striving in His cause - then wait until Allah brings about His decision; and [know that Allah] does not guide the rebellious. [Qur'an 9:24]

One should sacrifice in the cause of Allah because one likes to taste the sweetness of faith. The Prophet said (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him):

Those who have three things will taste the sweetness of faith, namely, a love for Allah and His Messenger greater than for anything else, a love for another only because of Allah, and hatred of returning to kufr (unbelief) as strong as one's hatred of being thrown into hell-fire. [Bukhari]

1.1.5. Prayer

1. One must serve Allah alone, and not admit any rivals to Him or partners. A Muslim worships Allah because Allah has ordered him through His Messenger to do so. Allah the Almighty has said:

   For We assuredly sent amongst every people a messenger (with the command) serve Allah and avoid evil. [Qur'an 16:36]

2. Every Muslim should learn and try to understand the names or attributes of Allah. Abu Hurairah narrated a hadith that the Prophet (may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said:

> Allah has 99 names, a hundred less one; everyone of you who memorizes them will be in Paradise. Allah is odd (not even) and Allah loves odd things. [Bukhari]

3. Allah should be remembered by reciting His names. Such dhikr or remembrance of Allah is the best medicine to cure the soul. It is also the most effective weapon to fight against problems of the world. Allah the Almighty told the Prophet to say:

   > He (Allah) guides to Himself all who turn to Him - those who believe and whose hearts find satisfaction in the remembrance of Allah - for without doubt in the remembrance of Allah human hearts find satisfaction. [Qur'an 13:28]

   Allah, the Almighty has said:

   > If anyone withdraws himself from remembrance of Allah Most Gracious, We appoint for him an evil one to be his intimate companion. [Qur'an 43.36]

4. Man should ponder the creation of Allah, not his dhat or person. The Prophet said in one hadith:

   > Ponder the creation of Allah and not about the person of Allah, because you will not be able to comprehend it. [This hadith has been narrated by Abu Nuiam in al-Hilyah, and also by al-Asfihani in at-Targhib uia-tarhib.]

5. One must fear only Allah. Such awe of Allah and fear of separation from Him strengthens one to abstain from all that is forbidden. Allah the Almighty has said:

   > And for those who fear their Lord unseen, for them is forgiveness and a great reward. [Qur'an 67:12]

   > Such as obey Allah and His messenger and fear Allah and do right will win (in the end). [Qur'an 24:7]

6. One should depend on Allah in every matter and make tawakul (trust in Allah). This generates such strength of commitment that one will feel at ease in everything one does. Allah the Almighty has said:

   > And if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is (Allah) for him. [Qur'an 65:3]

   The Prophet (s) said:

   > Be mindful of Allah, and Allah will protect you. Be mindful of Allah, and you will find Him in front of you. If you ask, ask of Allah; if you seek help, seek help of Allah. Know that if the nations were to gather together to benefit you with anything, it would benefit you only with something that Allah had already prescribed for you, and if they gather together to harm you with anything, they would harm you only with something Allah had already prescribed for you. The pens have been lifted and the pages have dried. [Tirmidhi]

7. One should thank Allah for His mercy and unlimited gifts. Thankfulness is part of virtue. Allah, the Almighty has said:

   > And Allah has brought you forth from your mothers' wombs knowing nothing but He gave you hearing and sight and intelligence and affections so that you might have cause to be grateful. [Qur'an 16:78]

   > A sign for them is the earth that is dead. We give it life and produce from it grain which you eat. And we produce orchards in it with date-palms and vines, and We cause springs to gush forth from it, so that they may enjoy the fruits of this (artistry). It was not their hands that made this. Will they not then give thanks? [Qur'an 36:33-35]

   Allah has promised to increase His mercy for those who thank Him, and to punish those who are ungrateful. Allah the Almighty has said:

   > And remember when your Lord made [this promise] known: "If you are grateful [to me], I shall most certainly give you more and more, but if you show ingratitude, truly My punishment is severe indeed." [Qur'an 14:7]

8. One must repent to Allah and make istighfar (a statement of repentance). This act of repentance purifies one's contrition and faith and instills a feeling of tranquility and peace in one's heart. Allah the Almighty has said:

   > If anyone does evil or wrongs his own soul but afterwards seeks Allah's forgiveness, he will find Allah Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. [Qur'an 4:110]

   > And those who, when they have done something to be ashamed of or wronged their own souls, earnestly bring Allah to mind and ask forgiveness for their sins.- and who can forgive sins except Allah - and are never obstinate in persisting knowingly in (the wrong) they have done; for such the reward is forgiveness from Allah. [Qur'an 3:135-6]

1.2. Worship

Worship or ibadah in Islam is the peak of submission to Allah, the connecting step between the creatures and the Creator, and the key to righteousness in dealing among the creatures of Allah.

This comprehensive worship or ibadah includes all the pillars of Islam, i.e., prayer, fasting, charity (zakat), and pilgrimage, as well as the entire shari'ah The logic of Islam requires life to be all worship and obedience. This is the meaning of Allah's statement:

I have created jinns and Men only that they may serve Me. No sustenance do I require from them, nor do I require that they should feed Me. For God is He who gives (all) sustenance, Lord of Power, steadfast (forever). [Qur'an 51:56-58]

And we have been taught to declare:

Truly, my prayer and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds. [Qur'an 6:163]

The worship of a Muslim should have the following characteristics. It should be:

1.2.1. Dynamic

Worship must be alive, inspired with the love of Allah, and productive of right action (ihsan). The Messenger of Allah (may the blessings and peace of Allah upon him), when asked about (ihsan). said:

It is to worship Allah as though you see Him, and though you see Him not, yet truly He sees you. [Bukhari and Muslim]

Worship must be humble, inspired by both awe of Allah and intimacy of feeling. 'Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) said:

The Messenger of Allah was talking with us and we were talking with him, but when the time for prayer came he seemed not to know us nor we him. [Azdi]

The Prophet (s) said:

Many a (people) get nothing but fatigue from their prayer; and many a (people) get from their fasting nothing but hunger and thirst. [Nasa'i]

1.2.2. Open-Hearted

Worship should be open to Allah and dedicated to Him, free from concerns about business and the hardships of this world. The Messenger of Allah indicated this by saying:

Allah will not look at the prayer which does not relate the man's heart with his body. [Musnab Al-Firdausi]

Prayer is directed toward the hereafter; when you start praying, you leave this physical world. Al-Hassan observed: A prayer without one's heart into it is a fast road to punishment.

1.2.3. Fervent

Worship should be impassioned, unsatiable and one should never be complacent about it. One should seek ever greater nearness to Allah by personal prayer and by responding to Him as a faithful servant. A qudsi hadith says that Allah told the Prophet (s):

I will declare war against him who shows hostility to a pious worshipper of Mine. And the most beloved things with which My slave comes nearer to Me is what I have enjoined upon him. My slave continued to come closer to Me through performing Nawafil (praying or doing extra deeds besides what is obligatory) till I love him. So I become the sense of hearing with which he hears, and the sense of sight with which he sees, and the hand with which he grips, and the leg with which he walks. And if he asks Me, I will give him, and if he asks my protection, I will protect him, I do not do anything as I hesitate to take the soul of the believer, for he hates death, and I hate to disappoint him. [A hadith qudsi narrated by Bukhari from Abu Hurairah.]

1.2.4. Dedicated

Worship should include supererogatory (nawafil) prayer at night (qiyam al layl). One should discipline oneself to become accustomed to prayer at night because it is the most effective armor of faith for a believer. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

Truly the rising by night is most potent for governing (the soul), and most suitable for (framing) the word (of prayer and praise). [Qur'an 73:6 34]

Allah praises His obedient servants in these words:

They were in the habit of sleeping but little by night, and in the hours of early dawn, they (were found) praying for forgiveness. [Qur'an 51:17-18]

Their limbs do forsake their beds of sleep, the while they call on their Lord, in fear and hope, and they spend (in charity) out of the sustenance that We have bestowed on them. [Qur'an 32:16]

1.2.5. Qur'an-Oriented And Full Of Awe

To nourish one's worship, one should allocate a certain time to read and think deeply about the Glorious Qur'an, especially at dawn because Allah the Almighty has said:

The prayer and reading in the morning carry their testimony. [Qur'an 17:78]

Always bear in mind the following words of Allah concerning His book:

Had we sent down this Qur'an to a mountain, verily, you would have seen it humble itself and cleave asunder for fear of Allah. [Qur'an 59:21]

Reading the Qur'an in this manner helps one to understand its message soberly, to ponder the awesome future of man, and to lament the melancholy fate of those who ignore the promises of Allah. The messenger of Allah said: "The Qur'an was revealed in all gravity, so when you read it try to be pensive." (Abu Ya'la and Abu Naim).

The Prophet (s) said: "The best worship for my ummah is reading the Qur'an. (narrated by Abu Naim).

Abdullah Ibn Masud related that the Prophet (s) said:

Verily, the Qur'an is the food of Allah, so come closer to it if you are able. Verily, the Qur'an is the rope of Allah, bright light, good medicine, and a guide for those who hold on to it. When he strays, the Qur'an will remind him of the path; and when he is misguided, the Qur'an

will correct him. Its miracle lasts forever, and will not be reduced by rejection. Read the Qur'an. Allah will reward each word of your reading tenfold; and W, 'U, 'M' is not one word, but three . [Narrated by al-Hakim]

In his advice to Abu Dharr the Prophet (s) told him:

Recite the Qur'an because this will cast light on the earth from the heavens? [Narrated by Ibn Haban]

Whoever declares lawful what [in the Qur'an] is prohibited denies the Qur'an. (Tirmidhi).

1.2.6. Constant In Supplication

Supplication forms the steps to Allah throughout one's life because supplication in every detail of life is the essence of worship. One should use the supplications of the Prophet (s) when appropriate. Allah the Almighty has said: "Call upon Me, and I will respond to you." [Qur'an 40:60] The following are 21 commonly used and illustrative supplications of the Prophet Muhammad (s):

1. When Getting Up All praise be to Allah who has given us life after death and unto Him is the resurrection. (Bukhari)

2. When Going to Bed In Your name my Lord, O my Lord, I lie down, and in Your name I will get up. If you should take my soul, forgive me my sins, and if you should let me live another day, protect me as You protect Your righteous servants. [Recorded by Bukhari, Muslim Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i and Ibn Majah]

3. When Getting Dressed and Undressed O Allah! Grant me the good of getting dressed (or undressed) and the good for which these clothes were made; and I seek refuge in You from any evil in dressing (undressing) and from the evil of ill intent.

4. When Entering the Bathroom O Allah! I seek refuge in You from bad and evil things. (Bukhari, Muslim)

5. When Leaving the Bathroom I seek Your forgiveness (O Allah!). (Abu Da'ud)

6. Before Meals O Allah! Bless what You have bestowed upon us, and protect us from the punishment of Hell fire. In the name of Allah.

7. After Meals Praise be to Allah who has fed us, provided us drink, and made us Muslims. [Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, Ibn Majah]

8. When Leaving or Entering a House In the name of Allah, I have put my trust in Allah, there is neither might nor power but in Allah. [Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i]

9. When Going to the Mosque O Allah! Place light in my heart, light in my sight, light in my hearing, light to my right, light to my left, light above me, light under me, light in front of me, light behind me, and grant me light. (Bukhari).

10. While Entering the Mosque O Allah! Open for me the doors of Your mercy. [Muslim, Abu Da'ud, al-Nasa'i]

11. While Leaving the Mosque O Allah, I beg of You Your Grace. [Muslim, Abu Da'ud, Nasa'i]

12. After Daily Prayer (Salah) If anyone extols Allah after every (regular daily) prayer thirty three times (or say subhanallah) and praises Allah thirty three times (or say alhamdulitiah) and declares His greatness thirty three times (or say Allahu akbar), and says, to complete a hundred,—Noone has the right to be worshipped but Allah alone, Who has no partner; to Him belongs all sovereignty, and to him is due all praise; and He has power over all things," his sins will be forgiven even if these are as abundant as the foam of the sea. (Muslim).

13. On Leaving a Meeting Glory be to You, O Allah: all praise is due to You: I bear witness that there is no deity but You. I beg your forgiveness and repent to You. (Abu Da'ud, al-Hakim).

14. When Setting Out on a Trip O Allah! We seek righteousness and piety from You in this journey of ours and deeds that please You. O Allah! Facilitate this journey of ours, and make it easy on us. O Allah! You are our companion during this journey and guardian of our family. O Allah! I seek refuge with You from any hardships of this journey, from evil sights, and from any harm to my property, home, and children. [Muslim, Ahmad, narrated by 'Ali, Ibn 'Umar.]

15. When One Can Not Sleep O Allah! The stars come; my eyes become quiet.

16. When Overwhelmed by a Problem or Sadness Allah suffices us and He is the best guardian. (Abu Da'ud)

17. When Congratulating Newlyweds May Allah Bless yours [your spouse], and you, and join you in a happy union. (Bukhari, Muslim).

18. Before Sexual Intercourse with One's Wife In the name of Allah. O Allah! Protect us from Satan and prevent Satan from approaching the child you may bestow on us. (Bukhari).

19. When Visiting the Sick O Allah! Remove his (or her) suffering, O Lord of mankind. Grant healing for You are the Healer. There is no cure but from You. Restore his (or her) health with no trace of illness. (Bukhari).

20. When Offering Condolences What Allah has taken belongs to Him and to Him belongs what He has given. With Him everything has a limited term (in this world), so be patient and seek reward from Allah. (Bukhari).

21. For the Dead in a Funeral Prayer O Allah Forgive him (or her), have mercy upon him, give him peace, and absolve him. Receive him with honor and make his grave spacious. Wash him with water, snow and hail. Cleanse him from faults as you would cleanse a white garment from impurity. And give him an abode, in exchange, more excellent than his home (in this world), and a family better than his family, and a wife better than his wife. Admit him to Paradise, and protect him from the torment of the grave and the torment of the fire. (Bukhari).

1.3. Morals

Moral behaviour is the bottom line or essential message of Islam. It has been narrated in a hadith of the Prophet (s):

Verily, I have been sent to perfect morals.

Allah also emphasized this in linking belief or Aqidah with action:

It is not piety that you turn your faces towards East or West - But truly pious is he who believes in Allah and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; and spend of his substance, out of love for Him, upon his near of kin, and the orphans, and the needy, and the wayfarer, and those who ask, and for the freeing of human beings from bondage; and is steadfast in prayer, and gives regular charity; and (truly pious are) they who keep their promises whenever they promise, and are firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and in times of peril. Such are the people of truth, the God-fearing. [Qur'an 2:177]

In another verse:

[Allah is well aware of] those who, when We establish them in the land, remain constant in prayer and give regular charity, enjoin the right and forbid the wrong, with Allah rests the end (decision) of (all) affairs . [Qur'an 22:41]

Morality is the sign and fruit of true belief. Belief without the resulting moral behaviour is worthless. The Prophet (s) portrayed this in his various sayings. He was asked: "What is the religion?" He replied: "The religion is morality." When asked, "What is woe (or affliction)?" he replied, "Real affliction is lack of morality."

On the Day of judgement, morality will be weighed more heavily than anything else. Those whose morals are weak and deeds are slight, will be judged accordingly. The Prophet (s), said:

Nothing that will be weighed on the Day of Judgement will weigh heavier than moral action. [Abu Da'ud and Tirmidhi]

In Islamic teaching, morality is the core of worship. Without morality, worship is meaningless and is considered to be no more than worthless custom and self-serving habit. Allah, the Almighty, said concerning prayers (salah): "Verily, prayers restrain from shameful and unjust deeds." [Qur'an 29:45] The Prophet (s) said: A person who does not desist from bad and unjust deeds after offering prayers (salah), strays away from Allah. [Narrated by Tabrani]

Concerning fasting, the Prophet (s) said: None of you should utter foul words or go to his wife or argue on a day of fasting, and when somebody reproaches or attacks you, say to him: "I am fasting." [Bukhari and Muslim]

About Hajj, Allah, the Almighty, has said:

For Hajj are the months well-known. And whoever undertakes the pilgrimage in those [months] shall while on the pilgrimage, abstain from lewd speech, from all wicked conduct, and from wrangling; and whatever good you do, (be sure) Allah is aware of it. [Qur'an 2:197]

The Prophet (s) said:

Whoever performs hajj and abstains from evil words and unlawful acts will return like the day he was born. [Bukhari and Muslim]

The Moral behaviour of a Muslim should be guarded by the following characteristics:

1.3.1. Scrupulous Conscience (wara)

A Muslim not only must avoid prohibited deeds but must be careful to avoid even any doubtful matter. This characteristic is expressed by the Qur'anic word, wara', which means both piety and caution. The Prophet (s) said: What is lawful is plain and what is unlawful is plain, and between the two are doubtful matters about which not many people know. Thus whoever avoids doubtful matters maintains clarity and assurance in practicing the religion and protecting his or her honor; but whoever falls into doubtful matters falls into the unlawful, like the shepherd who pastures his flock around a sanctuary, letting it graze almost but not quite inside. Truly every king has a sanctuary, and truly Allah's sanctuary is His prohibitions. Truly in the body there is a morsel of flesh which, if it be whole, all the body is whole and which, if it be diseased, all of it is diseased, and truly it is the heart. [Bukhari and Muslim]

The highest degree of wara' is indicated in the saying of the Prophet (s): "One will never achieve the level of mutaqqin (Godfearing virtuous persons) until he avoids even what is not considered sinful because he is afraid of failing into the prohibited." [Tirmidhi]

1.3.2. Modesty, By Guarding One's Eyes Against Lust

A Muslim should avoid looking at occasions of sin, such as at an improperly dressed woman, because such a sight tends to arise one's desire and might lead to committing a sin. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

Tell the believing men to lower their gaze. [Qur'an 24:30]

The Prophet (s) said:

You should guard your sight and protect your dignity, or Allah will cover your face with humiliation. [Tabrani]

1.3.3. Wisdom By Guarding one's Tongue Against Abuse

One should avoid unkind words, useless talk, slander, and detraction. Imam Nawawi said: "You should know that one should not talk except to say something beneficial. When one is undecided whether to speak or keep quiet, according to the sunnah it is better to keep quiet, since the allowable saying will probably lead to the unlawful or doubtful." Many ahadith of the Prophet (s) state that the tongue could lead to disaster and calamity. Some of these are given below.

The abuse of their tongues causes them to be thrown into the fire on their faces; the believer does not like to accuse, curse, and use foul language. [Tirmidhi]

Anybody who speaks a lot will have a lot of mistakes, and those who commit a lot of mistakes will have a lot of sins, and those who have a lot of sins will be in the Hellfire. [Baihaiqi]

subsubsectionModesty

A Muslim must always be modest, but this should not prevent a Muslim from telling the truth. Modesty prevents one from meddling in other people's affairs and from raising one's voice. Modesty produces infaq (the tendency to give rather than take in life) and contentment with what one has achieved after putting forth one's best effort. The Prophet (s) said:

Faith (iman) consists of more than sixty or seventy branches, the greatest of these is the kalimah, "there is no god but Allah- and the lowest is removing an obstacle from the way; modesty is one of the branches. [Bukhari and Muslim]

A truly modest person would always avoid evil and be careful regarding the rights of other people.

subsubsectionFortitude

A most important characteristic of a Muslim is fortitude, which is the strength to persevere in the good with kindness and patience. Good deeds are hated by most people, and teaching the truth is full of hardship, torture, oppression, blame, humiliation, and degradation. The dai' or caller to Islam faces all of these obstacles, and because of them, some of these people retreat from their commitment of daw'ah and abandon their mission to preach the good news of Islam.

It is clear that the duty and responsibility of a dai' are very challenging. They are responsible for bringing the message of Islam throughout the world so that all human beings can receive this message. In doing so, the caller has to encounter people of different backgrounds, the arrogant and knowledgeable, as well as the educated and the sensitive, the hard-hearted and the responsive. Therefore, the callers to Islam must communicate its message in a manner most fitting to win their hearts. They need a high degree of fortitude. Many verses of the Qur'an and ahadith of Prophet Muhammad (peace be on him) encourage Muslims to persevere in kindness and fortitude. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

But, indeed, if anyone shows patience and forgive, that would truly be an exercise of courageous will and resolution in the conduct of affairs. [Qur'an 42:43]

So overlook (any human faults) with gracious forgiveness. [Qur'an 15:85]

Those who patiently persevere will truly receive a reward without measure. [Qur'an 39:10]

... forgive and overlook, do you not wish that Allah should forgive you? [Qur'an 24:22]

And the servants of (Allah) Most Gracious are those who...... when the ignorant address them, they say, "peace!" [Qur'an 25:63]

The Messenger of Allah (s) said:

Verily, whoever has a character of kindness will achieve the same level (of righteousness) as those who fast and engage in constant prayer.

Do you want me to tell you what will cause Allah to secure your future and advance your cause in heaven? They replied: "Truly, yes, O Messenger of Allah!" He said, "Behave politely to those who do not know you; forgive those who have oppressed you; give to those who have never given anything to you; and make brothers of those who have denied their brotherhood with you."

When all creatures are gathered on Day of judgement, a caller will announce: "Where are the privileged people?" The Prophet (s) said: "Then a group of people, consisting of a small number, will rise and go to Heaven." Then the angels will say to them: "What are your privileges?" They will answer, "During the past, when we were oppressed, we were patient; when something bad was done to us, we behaved kindly." Then the angels will say: "Enter Heaven and get the reward you deserve."

The following illustrate the Prophet's demonstration of fortitude:

1. After the Battle of Hunain, a man said, "By Allah this division of war booty is unjust and not for the sake of Allah." When the Prophet heard this, he said, "May Allah be merciful to Prophet Moses. Indeed, he was tortured more than I am now, but he kept patience."

2. Anas narrated: "One day the Prophet (s) entered the mosque with clothes containing a piece of course cloth made in Najran. Then an Arab (bedouin) came from the back and yanked the cloth until a scratch was visible on the neck of the Prophet. Then the bedouin said: "O Muhammad, give me all the wealth of Allah that you have." The Prophet turned to him, smiled, and said: "Give him what he wants."

3. Abu Hurairah narrated: "A Bedouin came to the Prophet and said, 'O Muhammad give me two camels loaded with goods. Verily such a gift won't make a dent on either your or your father's wealth." Then he approached the Prophet and yanked his cloth until a scratch was visible on his neck. The Prophet told his companions to give the bedouin a sack of flour and dates.

4. At-Tabarani narrated: "There was a woman who used to talk nonsense to men. one day, she passed by the Prophet while he was sitting on the ground eating bread and said, 'Look, the Prophet is sitting and eating like a slave'."

5. Abu Hurairah narrated: "Aman said, 'O Muhammad, I have relatives with whom I always try to keep good relations, but they break relations with me. I behave politely to them, but they behave badly to me. I behave kindly to them but they behave harshly to me,' Then the Prophet said, 'If this is true, it seems that you are too much for them, so Allah will help you with them if you continue such behaviour.'"

6. A Jew came to the Prophet asking for his debt and said: "You are from the tribe of Abd Manaf whose tribe likes to delay paying debts." When Umar heard this, he swore that he would cut off the Jew's head. The Prophet said to him, "O, Umar, you should have told him to ask for his debt politely, and you should have asked me to pay him immediately."

7. It has been narrated that the Prophet Isa (s) always travelled from one place to another to spread his message with his disciples. He was constantly speaking good to his people but they replied with insults, jesting, and shouts. His companions were surprised to see this and asked him what was the cause. The Prophet Isa (s) replied, "Every person acts in accordance with what is in him."

All of these incidents prove the importance for the callers to Islam to behave kindly, patiently, and openheartedly, especially in response to aggravation from relatives, friends, and loved ones. Such behaviour will generate love and can avoid divisions and argument. The caller to Islam need only act as Allah wants.

1.3.4. Honesty And Sincerity

A Muslim should be truthful, not dishonest, and speak the truth regardless of the consequences. Telling a lie is the worst kind of degraded behaviour and provides an opening to the devil. Such dishonesty and insincerity weaken the soul, depress the spirit and undermine the morality generally. Avoiding this behaviour will produce the characteristics of fortitude and endurance and will guard against self-doubt and the influence of the devil. The Prophet (s) said:

Verily truth will lead to goodness and goodness will lead to heaven. A person who develops a habit of honesty will be accepted by Allah as an honest person. But lying leads to evil, and evil leads to the Hellfire. A person who lies until dishonesty becomes habitual will be written off by Allah as a liar.

subsubsectionHumility

The Muslim should be humble, especially toward other Muslims. There is no difference between rich and poor. The Prophet (s) always prayed for protection from pride. Once he said: "No one will enter Paradise who has even a little bit of pride." [Muslim] In a qudsi hadith, Allah

says, "Pride is My attire, greatness is My robe, whoever competes with me in either of these will be cast into Hellfire."

subsubsectionTrust And Kindness

Every Muslim should avoid undue suspicion, slander, detraction, teasing, and fault-finding. Allah, the Almighty. has said:

O you who believe, avoid suspicion as much as possible, for suspicion in some cases is a sin, and spy not on each other nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother? Nay you would abhor it. But fear Allah, for Allah is Oft-returning, Most Merciful. [Qur'an 49:12]

And those who undeservedly annoy believing men and women are guilty of calumny and a glaring sin. [Qur'an 33:51]

The Prophet (s) said:

O you who believe with your tongue only, your belief does not yet enter your heart. Do not slander a Muslim or tell his faults nor even look for your brother's faults, because whoever uncovers his brother's fault, will have his own faults revealed by Allah even in his own house.

subsubsectionGrace

A Muslim should behave graciously, sacrificing self and wealth for the sake of Allah. We see many examples of status and high ambition demolished by the desire for wealth. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

(Believers are those) who spend (freely) out of the gifts We have given them for sustenince. [Qur'an 8:4]

Whatever good you give benefits your own souls, provided that you only do so seeking the pleasure of Allah, for whatever good you give will be repaid in full, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly. [Qur'an 2:272]

The Prophet (s) said..

Not a day passes but Allah sends two angels to every servant of His, and the angel says, "O, Allah, reward those who spend their wealth for Your sake;" and the other says, ""O Allah, punish those who are stingy." [Bukhari and Muslim]

1.3.5. Good Example

A Muslim must set a good example. Every action should portray Islamic principles in everyday life, in eating, drinking, dressing, speaking, in peace, during a journey, at home, in action, and in silence.

1.4. Family Life

Acceptance of Islam carries the obligation to be part of its message by living one's life in accordance with this message so that one is a Muslim in belief, worship, and morals. Living the message of Islam means working hard within one's surrounding community at all levels from the family to the nation, to the community of mankind, since Islam was revealed for all mankind.

The Messenger of Allah (s) said: Whoever does not care about Muslims is not one of them. If one's duty is to establish the ummah or moral community in one's society and to convey Islam to this society, the first step in fulfilling this duty is to make one's home Islamic. One must establish the din or Islamic way of life in one's immediate community, that is, in one's family, with one's wife or husband, children, and relatives in the extended family. This is exactly what the Messenger of Allah (s) did at the beginning of his mission. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

So call not on any other god with Allah or you will be among those under the penalty. And admonish your nearest kinsmen, and lower your wing to the believers who follow you. [Qur'an 26:213-215]

So the first responsibility of a Muslim, other than to oneself, is to one's family, because Allah, the Almighty, has said:

O you who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed) angels stern (and) severe who flinch not (from executing) the commands they receive from Allah, but do (precisely) what they are commanded? [Qur'an 66:6]

1.4.1. Responsibilities Before Marriage

Islamic teachings and practices help one to establish a Muslim family and secure it on the right path. The following directives facilitate observance of marital responsibilities:

1. Marriage is for the sake of Allah. Its purposes are to establish a Muslim family, have offspring, transmit the message of Allah, and through them, carry on the human race. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

   Say: "Allah did choose Adam and Noah, the family of Abraham, and the family of 'Imran above all people, offspring, one of the other. [Qur'an 3:34]

2. Marriage serves to protect one's modesty and dignity, and one's fear of the Lord. The Prophet of Allah (s) said:

   Three [people] are entitled to Allah's help. The fighter (mujahid) in the cause of Allah, the trustee, and the person who marries for protection (of his or her modesty). [Tirmidhi]

   Whoever marries, has completed half of his religion, and the other half is fear of Allah. [Tabrani]

3. The choice of a lifetime partner, a wife or a husband, demands one's best effort. The Messenger of Allah (s) said:

   "Choose[the best] for your generation because [the failure of a single] generation can lead to a crisis." [Ibn Majah]

4. The qualities of a good wife are good behavior and religious commitment, not wealth and beauty. The Messenger of Allah (s), said:

   Do not marry women because of their beauty; their beauty may spoil them. Do not marry them because of their money; their money may oppress them. But marry them because of their piety (din). And a slave girl, deaf, but pious is better. [Ibn Majah]

   If a man marries a woman because of her (worldly) status, Allah will reward him only with degradation; and if a man marries her because of her wealth, this will bring him only poverty; and if a man marries because of her family, Allah will reward him only by humiliation; but if a man marries for the sake of Allah, Allah will bless him with her and bless her with him. [Tabrani]

1.4.2. Responsibilities In Marriage

The choice of a good spouse does not reduce one's responsibilities after the marriage. As a matter of fact, one's major responsibilities start right at the first moment of marriage. These are to:

1. Deal with one's wife kindly so as to achieve mutual understanding. The Messenger of Allah (s) said:

   The best of you are those who are best to their wives and I am the best (among you) to my family. [Ibn Majah and Al-Hakim]

   The believers with the most perfect faith are those who have the best disposition and are kind to their wives. [Tirmidhi]

2. Develop harmony in thought and spirit based on love and not only on sexual compatibility. A Muslim couple should read together, worship together, organize things together, and have time to enjoy each other and play together. Thus the Messenger of Allah (s) used to challenge his wife, 'Aisha, to run races and helped in her housework, even by mending shoes.

3. Base the relationship of marriage on Islam and in no way denigrate it or forsake it for convenience or out of weakness. It was narrated that the Messenger of Allah (s) said: "Whoever is submissive to the likes and dislikes of a woman will be thrown by Allah into Hell," and. "A man's sin is as great as his wife's ignorance." And, "Shame on a man who becomes his wife's slave." [Al-Firdausi]

1.4.3. Responsibilities Of Raising Children

A good wife builds a successful marriage by helping to raise the children according to good principles of Islamic education. The choice of a bad wife or failure to achieve Islamic marriage will cause severe problems and eventually will destroy the whole family.

Any conflict and tension in the life of husband and wife will be reflected directly on the education and psychology of the children. Furthermore, the children will inherit the problems and will be misled. One's first responsibility in the Islamic education of one's children therefore is to- build an Islamic marriage. Allah, the Almighty, has taught us to pray:

Our Lord! Grant to us wives and offspring who will be the comfort of our eyes and give us the grace to lead the righteous. [Qur'an 25:74]

All children are born innocent. If they are raised well, they will become righteous, but if they are raised in a bad environment, their future will be dim. The Messenger of Allah (s) said"

All children are born innocent. It is their parents who make them Jewish, Christian, or Zoroastrian. [Bukhari and Muslims]

Rearing a son is better than giving a charity. There is no better gift from a father to his children than good (education and) behavior. [Tirmidhi]

Be good to your children and teach them good manners.[Ibn Majah]

When a man dies, only three deeds will continue to earn him merit. These are an endowment or scholarship or continuous charity, beneficial knowledge, and righteous sons who pray for him.

1.5. Self Control

Every person faces internal conflict from birth to death and will either triumph over it or succumb to it. Allah, the Almighty, says:

By the soul, and proportion and order given to it; and its enlightenment as to its wrong and its right - truly he succeeds who purifies it, and he fails who corrupts it! [Qur'an 91:7-10]

The Prophet (s) warned:

Trails will be opened to a man just like a mat, one after another. When a heart is influenced by a trial, one black dot will be written on it, and when a heart ignores it, then a white dot will be written until the heart becomes one of the two kinds, either white as white stone, which will pass any test, or dark black, because it has never followed the good or ignored evil in its conflict with the soul.

Mankind can be categorized into two groups:

1. Those who are defeated by their desires. These people obey the world and are immersed in worldly matters. They are the nonbelievers. Those who follow them are the ones who forget Allah, so Allah forgets them. Says the Qur'an:

   Have you ever seen a person who takes as his god his own desires? Allah knows this and so has left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart [and understanding] and veiled his sight. Who, then, will guide him after Allah [has withdrawn guidance]? Will you not then receive admonition. [Qur'an 45:23]

2. Those who struggle against their desires. In doing so, sometimes they win and sometimes they lose. When they do wrong they repent. When they commit sins they regret them and ask forgiveness from Allah. Allah, the Almighty, says:

   Vie with one another to attain your Sustainer's forgiveness and to a paradise as vast as the heavens, when they and the earth, which has been readied for the God-conscious who, when they have done something to be ashamed of or wronged their own souls,

> earnestly bring God to mind and ask for forgiveness for their sins - for who can forgive sins except Allah - and do not knowingly persist in (the wrong) they have done. [Qur'an 3:135]
>
> The Prophet (s) told us: "All sons of Adam make mistakes. The best among them are those who do wrong and repent." [Tirmidhi]
>
> In this matter it was reported from Wahib ibn Munabbih, that once Iblis went to meet Yahya ibn Zakariya. Yahya said to him, "Tell me how you fare with the sons of Adam." Iblis said, "Some of them are just like you; they are free from sins so we can never seduce them. The second type of people I can play with just like children play with balls. Their desires help us to defeat them. But the third type of people are very difficult for us. We pursue them until we succeed in achieving what we want, but then they repent, and destroy all that we have accomplished, so we can never frustrate or finally stop them."

1.5.1. The Elements Of Strength In Combatting the Physical Appetites

There are two sources of strength in managing physical desires. These are:

1) Hearts

Hearts become an element of strength in maintaining order in one's soul when they are alive, soft, pure, and strong. Remember the saying of 'Ali ibn 'Abi Talib: "Allah has a water container in the earth, which is a heart. The hearts that Allah likes most are those which are the softest, the purest, and the strongest." Then 'Ali explained the meaning of these words, namely, "strongest in religion, purest in trust, and softest toward one's brother" 'Ali ibn 'Abi Talib added: "The hearts of Believers are pure and full of light. On the other hand, the hearts of Disbelievers are dark and always sick." In the words of the Qur'an:

Believers are those who, when God is mentioned, tremble with awe in their hearts, and, when they hear His messages, find their faith strengthened, and put all their trust in their Lord? [Qur'an 8:2]

Truly it is not their eyes that are blind, but their hearts, which are in their breasts.[Qur'an 22:46]

Will they not, then, ponder over the Qur'an? - or are there locks upon their hearts? [Qur'an 47:24]

2) Mind and Intellect

The rational faculty of one's soul, known as the mind, and the spiritual faculty, known as the intellect or spirit, can contribute to victory over the material faculty, known as the body, if both mind and spirit are supplied with knowledge from experience and study. Such knowledge makes possible discrimination between good and bad and can bring one closer to Allah, so one can know His strength and greatness. This is what Allah meant in His revelation, about those who can see past the observable world, to the inner meaning behind it:- Of all His servants, only those endowed with spiritual understanding stand [truly] in awe of Allah, [for they alone comprehend] that Allah truly is Almighty, and much Forgiving. [Qur'an 35:28]

The Prophet (s) praised the marvel of the human mind and spirit in his exclamation:

The greatest dignity bestowed by Allah on His creatures was the human mind and spirit. [Tirmidhi]

Once the Prophet (s), said to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib:

A person tries to get closer to Allah with various good deeds; get yourself closer to Allah with knowledge.

The highest achievements come from the faculties of the mind and Spirit, because they can direct one to the right path and protect one from evil. This Is why Islam encourages us to acquire knowledge and to deepen our knowledge of the din so that our mind can learn to differentiate between good and bad and between right and wrong. The Prophet (s) said:

Whomever Allah wants to reward with goodness He gives him an understanding of the din.

The advantages of the learned over those who only worship is like my advantages over the lowest people among my companions.

These advantages come from moral values and from the role of knowledge in deepening our faith and revealing the reality of the universe. The minds of the awakened believers can differentiate between good and bad, right and wrong, lawful and unlawful, because such believers have an awareness that enables them to see everything through the light of Allah. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

For any to whom Allah gives not light, there is no light? [Qur'an 24:40]

Spiritual illumination can be extinguished only by iniquitous actions, by constantly remaining in a state of iniquity, and by deliberately committing sins and never repenting afterwards. The Prophet (s) said:

If a person commits sins, his spirit will be extremely alienated from him.

If it were not because of the evils playing around the hearts of the sons of Adam, surly they could comprehend the governance of the heavens and the earth.

Anas reported:

While I was on the way to meet 'Uthman, I saw a woman. I watched the woman with my full attention and I was taken with her beauty. When I entered, 'Uthman said: "One of you entered this house to meet me while the signs of adultery were still visible in both of his eyes. Don't you know that one can commit adultery through one's eyes? Therefore you must make repentance or I will mete out to you with a special punishment!" Then I asked, "Is there any revelation after the Prophet?" Uthman answered, "No, but my opinion is objective and based on

clear evidence and careful scrutiny."

The Signs Of Spiritual Defeat

When one's heart becomes immoveable, one's mind perverted, and one's spirit immersed in darkness, especially after acknowledged defeat in combat with the Devil, then all the doors of evil are opened to one's soul. The Devil's evil power than spreads in the sons of Adam like the flow of blood in their bodies. We must be aware of this danger and recognize that once the soul's defenses are down the Devil will become its closest friend. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

Are you not aware of those who would be friends with people whom Allah has condemned? It is they who are the greatest liars. Satan has gained mastery over them and caused them to remain oblivious of the remembrance of Allah. [Qur'an 58: 19]

The Qur'an tells us that the Satan, the sworn enemy of man, declared to Allah after expulsion from Paradise. Satan said:

Now that You have thwarted me, I shall most certainly lie in ambush for them all along Your straight way, and shall most certainly fall upon them openly as well as in a manner beyond their ken, and from the right and the left? [Qur'an 7:16-17]

The most dangerous disease that strikes those who are defeated is the disease of doubt. Satan makes them feel uncertain about everything they do, in order to cause them to deviate from the right way of Allah. In this context, the Prophet (s) said:

Verily, Satan tries to stop the sons of Adam in many ways. He tries to stop them by attacking Islam itself, saying: "Why are you embracing Islam and leaving your religion and the religion of your forefathers." The sons of Adam ignore the Satan and embrace Islam. Then Satan tries to stop them by opposing migration for the sake of Allah, saying: "What are you doing now is migration, wherein you abandon your home and all that bore you." The sons of Adam just ignore the Satan and then migrate. Then the Satan tries to stop them by attacking jihad, saying: "What you are doing now is waging jihad, whereby you will fight and then get killed, and your wives will marry other men and your belongings will be divided." But the sons of Adam ignore him and wage jihad. Then the Prophet (s) said: "Whoever does this and dies has earned the right to Paradise." [Nasa'i]

The cowardly tactics of Satan are alluded to in the following: Satan says to man, "Deny the truth!" But as soon as [man] has denied the truth, [Satan] says, "Behold, I am not responsible for you: behold I fear Allah, the Sustainer of all the worlds!" [Qur'an 59:16]

1.5.2. Vulnerabilities to Evil and Defenses Against Satan

In order to help men overcome the trials and fantasies of Shaitan and to overpower this arch enemy, Islam provides many weapons. The first is to recognize one's vulnerabilities. Knowledgeable scholars advise one to learn how Shaitan enters the hearts of men, namely, through the following ten doors:

1. Greed and hostility. One can counter this by developing the habit of trusting others and feeling content with what one has achieved after sincere effort.
2. Love of this life, which one can counter by fearing the approach of sudden death.
3. Love of idleness and luxuries, which one can overcome by contemplating the assurance that good times will not last, but punishments will.
4. Pride, which can be opposed by humbly thanking Allah for His bounties and fearing His punishment.
5. Haughtiness and disrespect for others, which one can overcome by recognizing their God-given dignity and rights.
6. Envy, which can be combatted by developing the virtue of contentment (qana) with what one has earned through hard work and by accepting the gifts and rewards from Allah to his creatures.
7. Boastfulness and a craving for praise, which one can counter by developing the virtues of honesty and sincerity.
8. Covetousness, which one can overcome by remembering the transience and inevitable destruction of all material possessions and the eternity of Allah, as well as by remembering the assurance of reward from Allah and the futility of relying on rewards from one's fellow men.

The best way, according to Islamic wisdom, to avoid Satanic influence is to remember Allah by invoking him at the beginning of everything we do. In this context, Abu Hurairah narrated how the Shaitan for the Believers met the Shaitan for Nonbelievers.

The Shaitan for the non-Believers is very fat, in contrast the Believers, who is very thin and sad. The Shaitan for the Believers was asked why he was thin and sad. He said: I went to a man to test him. Whenever he wanted to eat he mentioned the name of Allah, which made me hungry. When he drank, he mentioned the name of Allah, which made me thirsty. Also when he wore his cloths, he mentioned the name of Allah, which made me feel naked; when he applied hair cream, he mentioned the name of Allah, and it made my hair dry and messy. The Shaitan for

the Non-Believers then said: "But when I went to people who never did all these things that you have mentioned, I shared their food, their drink and their clothes."

Another way of defense against Shaitan is to avoid eating luxurious foods even though they are lawful and clean, because Allah has said:

Eat and drink but not to excess, for Allah does not love wasters. [Qur'an 7:31]

The Prophet (s) said.

Verily Shaitan runs through the sons of Adam like the flow of the blood, so constrain the path of the Shaitan by hunger. [Ahmad]

Another way to defend against the evil one is by reading the Qur'an, remembering Allah, and making repentance. The Prophet (s) said:

Verily, Shaitan attacks the hearts of the sons of Adam. Whenever the sons of Adam remember Allah, Shaitan backs off, but whenever they forget Allah, Shaitan eats their hearts.

Still another weapon for defense is to avoid hasty behavior and adopt the character of carefulness in everything one does. The Prophet (s) said,

Hastiness is from Shaitan and caution (and carefulness) is from Allah the Almighty.

Most important though in introducing discipline and self-control in one's life, is to act on the following wisdom recalled by Allah:

When thoughts of evil from Satan assault them, those who fear Allah, bring Allah to remembrance, whereupon, lo! they see (aright) . [Qur'an 7:201]

1.6. Preparing for the Future

Faith in Islam produces conviction that its potential for good in the world is unlimited. As a system of thought and a way of life from Allah, the Almighty, Islam is the primordial religion and the only "religion" designed to govern this life. It is the only "religion" that is designed for the nature of man by man's Creator and is capable of producing and sustaining a balance between man's spiritual and physical needs. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

Should He not know - He who created [everything]? For He is the One Who understands the finest mysteries (and) is well acquainted (with them). [Qur'an 67:14]

Islam's Divine character gives it more dignity than any manmade system. This universal din is also eternal and so can fulfill the needs of man at all times and places, at every level of community.

Its universality means that Islam is all-encompassing and thus extends beyond the boundaries of climate and across all differences in race, language and culture. The open and comprehensive character of Islam is inherent in its Divine origin as a gift from Allah designed for human nature.

Its all-inclusiveness as a macro-system of Divine purpose for all life makes this din relevant to all life's problems and opportunities. The systems - analytic framework or paradigm of this religion, known as the shari'ah or - Islamic law," makes it possible for scholars, using ijtehad or analytical logic, to apply it through the analogical techniques (qiyas) of istihsan (identification of the general good - hasn of man) and maslaha mursalah (commonweal).

Its comprehensiveness distinguishes this primordial Islamic din from all other man-made systems. Since Islam comes from Allah, Who is the Most Knowledgeable and knows everything about mankind's changing needs, by comparison with it, any man-made system must he incomplete. No other system can equal its guidance for human governance, whether at the psychological level of the human person or at the sociological level of the human community. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

[Say: "Our life takes its"] hue from Allah! And who could give a better hue [to life] than Allah, if we but truly worship him? [Qur'an 2:138]

In their efforts to build a better world, Muslims must know the limits of the manmade systems, such as capitalism, socialism, communism, and democracy. As products of human philosophies and social engineering, these systems are inherently limited or incomplete in substantive scope and time-frame.

The narrow-mindedness of both left and right wings have always jeopardized humankind. These secular extremists are responsible for the disappearance of family and community ties, and for moral degradation and for the decline of eternal values. Their egoism and individualism have replaced the community values of helping, loving, and caring for each other.

Neither capitalism nor socialism can build the paradise that their proponents promise, because their narrowly focused institutions promote the concentration of wealth and ignore the incentives of broad-based ownership of the means of production and other essential characteristics of a complete system of society based on Islamic principles of economic justice. Equally inadequate are the political systems of modern secular culture, whether democracy, republic or monarchy, because for most of the people in the world they have brought on corruption and exploitation. Reliance on governance by military force to sustain unjust regimes has oppressed billions of people, including Muslim minorities in Kashmir, Eritria, Ethiopia, the Philippines and Palestine.

All of these man-made systems of economy, politics and security undermine the basic human responsibilities of Islamic law, namely, the responsibility to promote the rights to life, community, freedom, dignity, knowledge, and private property. These secular systems, spawned in modern Western civilization, can be replaced by morally and spiritually based systems only when Muslims become aware

that Allah has shown us the principles and strategy designed to liberate man from the clutches of Satan. Truth and justice can become governing values in the world only when the Muslims revive their own heritage and apply the Qur'an and sunnah to change themselves as tile first step to change the world.

Verily, Allah does not change the condition of a people unless they change their inner selves. [Qur'an 13:11.]

2. PART II

2.1. Living for Islam

Commitment to Islam requires proper creed, worship, and morals and observance of the Islamic guidelines for family life and personal self-discipline, as elaborated in Part One of this book. In addition, true commitment requires every Muslim to dedicate his or her life in a jihad to establish and maintain a system of Islamic governance.

Three Types of People

There are three broad categories of people:

1) The Materialists

The first group is secular in both ideology and practice. Regarding these people the Qur'an says:

And they say: "There is nothing beyond our life in this world, for we shall not be raised from the dead." [Qur'an 6:29]

And they say: "What is there but our life in this world? We shall die as we come to life, and nothing but Time can destroy us." But of that they have no knowledge; they merely conjecture. [Qur'an 45:24]

The secular humanists including the Communists and the existentialists (or post-modernists), all are products of this materialist ideology. A philosopher once said: "This universe was not created by either God or man. It has existed in the past and will be a torch of life that burns and dies in the future in accordance with the governing laws of nature." Lenin commented laconically, "This is a pleasant description of dialectical materialism."

When mankind ignores the existence of life after death, where all the deeds are accountable, the material world will he man's greatest goal and have the highest priority in his drive for knowledge They will work for it and drown in their desires for its delights without limit.

2) The Functional Atheists

These people claim to he Believers but are captives of materialism. They believe formally in Allah and the afterlife, and even think they are doing good, but their belief, worship (if any), and morals are pretentious and have no practical effect in life. Basically this type of people are materialists even though they may perform spiritual acts. Functionally, these people are atheists.

According to Imam Hasan Al-Banna there are three such groups of people. [Hasan Al-Banna, Toward the Future of Man] He writes, "The Qur'an has established the purpose of our life and the reason for our creation. First, the Qur'an refers to a group of people who live only for eating and enjoyment:

Verily Allah will admit those who believe and do righteous deeds to Gardens beneath which river flow; while those who reject Allah will enjoy (this world) and eat as cattle eat; and the fire will be their abode [Qur'an 47:12]

Second, the Qur'an describes a group of people who bye for the glitter of worldly wealth:

Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet: women and sons; heaped-up hoards of gold and silver; horses branded (for blood and excellence); and (wealth of) cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life. But nearness to Allah is the best of the goals. [Qur'an 3:14]

Thirdly, the Qur'an designates a group of people who live only to slander and find fault with others and to encourage mischief and destruction in these word:

There is the type of man whose speech about this world's life may dazzle you, and he calls Allah to witness what is in his heart. Yet he is the most contentious of enemies. When he turns his back, his aim everywhere is to spread mischief throughout the world and destroy crops and cattle. But Allah does not love mischief.

These three goals in life Allah has bid us to avoid, because He has assigned the believers a higher purpose, which is to guide mankind to the divine path, and to illuminate the universe with the brightness of Islam

3) The Sojourners

These people, who view themselves as living only temporarily in the world, are the true believers. They understand the real meaning of life and the value of this world compared to the hereafter. The Qur'an says"

What is the life of this world but play and amusement? But best is the home in the hereafter for those who are righteous. Will you not then understand. [Qur'an 6:32]

This worldly life can not deter them from pursuing the purpose of their creation in this life. Allah says in the Qur'an:

I have created jinns and men only that they may serve Me. [Qur'an 51:56]

The True Believer conceives the world as a field of struggle. His life, knowledge, business, wealth, home, thoughts are devoted to obeying Allah and fulfilling His will. In contrast, the materialist uses the same capabilities to fulfill his selfish desires. This is evident in most of the achievements of modern civilization. The goal of this civilization is to maximize human pleasure and not to develop man and the universe toward peace and harmony. Most of the human inventions, such as the automobile, aeroplane, refrigerator, dryer, washer, furniture, clothes, music, and thousands of industrial products are designed to fulfill the

human desire for physical ease and enjoyment. Islam encourages scientific and industrial research, development, and production , but only in accordance with moral guidelines in order to assure that our material progress will not cause harm and instead will benefit the entire community of man.

2.1.1. Essential Knowledge

In order to live entirely for Islam and follow the Islamic path, one must master some basic elements of knowledge, among which the following five should be highlighted:

1. The Divine Purpose of Life - to serve and worship Allah only. [Qur'an 51:56] He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six days - and His Throne was over the waters - that He might try you to determine who is best in conduct. [Qur'an 11:7]

2. The Value of the World

   Allah tells us:

   Do you prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter? But little is the comfort of this life as compared with the Life to Come. [Qur'an 9:38]

   Such are the possessions of this world's life; but the nearness toAllah is the best of the goals. [Qur'an 3:14]

   And in the hadith we read:

   It has been narrated that one day the Prophet (s) was standing beside a garbage dump and he called to the companions and said: "Pursue the world." Then he took a smelly piece of garbage and a rotten bone and said: "This is the world."

   On another day, the Prophet (s) saw the cadaver of a young sheep that had been thrown away by the owner. Then the Prophet (s) turned towards his companions and said: "Have you ever thought how worthless is this cadaver to the owner. By Allah, the world is more worthless in the eyes of Allah than this cadaver in the eyes of its owner. If the world were equal in value to a mosquito's wing, surely Allah would not have given the unbelievers even a sip of water."

   Then the Prophet (s) said: "Doomsday is around the corner, but humans are still lusting for the world and are distant from Allah." Then he added. "The world is a prison for the believers and paradise for the unbelievers." [Muslim]

3. The Certainty of Death Allah tells us:

   All that is on earth will perish, but the face of your Lord will abide for ever - Full of Majesty, Bounty and Honor. [Qur'an 55:26-27]

   Every soul shall have a taste of death, but only on the Day of Judgement shall you be paid your full recompense. Only he who is saved from the Fire and admitted to the Garden will have attained his purpose in life, for the life of this world is but goods and chattels of deception. [Qur'an 3:185]

   Several abadith are relevant:

   Abu Dharr AI-Ghifari reports: "I asked the Messenger of Allah, 'What was the message of the revelation to Moses?' The Prophet (s) replied: 'The books revealed to Moses are a reminder. It is surprising to see people who believe in death but still feel happy, people who believe in Hell but still laugh, people who believe in Allah's assurance but still feel unsatisfied, people who notice how the world treats those who live in it and still desire it, and people who believe in the Day of Judgement and still do not do good deeds'."

   It has been narrated from Abu Hurairah that he said: "We went out together with the Prophet (s) to accompany a funeral. As the Prophet (s) was sitting next to the grave, he said, -Whenever a person comes to this grave it will shout: "Oh son of Adam, have you forgotten me? Do you realize that I am a lonely place to be in, a quiet place, a place for insects, and a narrow place unless Allah makes me wider?" Then the Prophet (s) said, 'The grave is either part of a garden of Paradise or a hole in Hell'." [Tabrani]

4. The Difference Between Right and Wrong

   In order to live for Islam one must learn the essentials of Islam jurisprudence, which is foundation of Islam and of all Knowledge. Allah the Almighty, has said:

   Do not approach the Qur'an in Haste, before it has been revealed to you in full, but say, "O my Sustainer, make me grow in knowledge." [Qur'an 20:114]

   The Prophet (s) said:

   Verily, knowledge is obtained by learning while understanding is obtained by experience. Whenever Allah wants to benefit a person, He gives him understanding of the din. [Tabrani]

   Verily, the prophets did not want dinars of dirhams, but knowledge. Whoever will accept it, will receive a real wealth. [Abu Da'ud and Tabrani]

5. The Fallacies of Ignorant

   The wise man should learn to know his enemies. He should understand their way of thinking, their factional divisions, and their way of fighting. Moreover, should study their defects and shortcomings. Since

one's greatest enemy is ignorance, one must know the fallacies of the ignorant and their direct and indirect consequences, so then one can be prepared confront and fight them. The advice of the Prophet (s) is true:

Whoever learns the language of tribe, will be safe from (their)tricks.

2.1.2. The Characteristics of People who live for Islam

Those who live by Islam and for Islam must follow the teachings of Islam, so that its patterns is their lives are distinguishable form the non-Islamic patterns of others. A life committed to Islam is:

Action-Oriented Commitment to practical action is essential because faith is not mere idea by it is rooted in your heart so that its truthfulness can be proved by action. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

Verily man is loss, except such as have faith and do good works. [Qur'an 103:2-3]

Do you enjoin right conduct on people, and forget (to practice it) yourselves, and yet you study the Book? Will you not understand? [Qur'an 3:44]

Grievously odious is it in the sight of Allah that you do not practice what you preach. [Qur'an 61:3]

Al-Ghazali said: "Two men bring disaster to me, a virtuous man with his falsehood and an ignorance man with his adoration. The latter dupes people with his adoration and the former dupes people with his falsehood." The prophet (s) reminded the believers:

Be a person who practices wisdom and not one who merely talks about it.

Problem-Oriented A committed activist is aware of problems encountered by other Muslims and joins them in seeking solution. The Prophet (s) said:

Move together with the book of Allah wherever it takes (You).

Whoever does not pay special attention to the problems of Muslims, is not one of us.

You are a corner of the corners of Islam, so don't let it be attacked from your corner.

In the battle of Uhud, Saad Ibn Al-Rabie died with 70 wounds on his body. Just before he died, he said to Zaid ibn Thabit: "Verily, I have smelt the aroma of Paradise. Tell the Ansar that Allah will honor His promises to those who are sincere toward the Prophet (s) and are able to catch his attention." Then Allah took his soul.

Honorable in the Defense of Truth Pride in one's faith is one of the characteristics of the Believers. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

But honor belongs to Allah and His Messenger, and to the Believers. [Qur'an 63:8]

So lose not heart, nor fall into despair, for you must gain mastery if you are true in faith. [Qur'an 3:139]

It has been narrated that the Believers who were migrating to Ethiopia to gain freedom of religion met the King of Ethiopia, Al Najashi. One of the priests who was there with Al-Najashi started the discussion with the Believers by commanding: "Bow to the King (AI-Najashi). "Ja'afar ibn Abi Talib, who was the leader of the Believers, answered: "We are a group of people who never bow except to Allah."

The history of Islam is full of anecdotes that show the early Muslims to be excellent in morals, and superb and courageous in action. These have been recorded by members of the first Islamic generation, for example, AI-Khubaib ibn 'Udai, Zaid ibn Ad-Dathanah, Rub'ie ibn 'Amir, Masaab ibn 'Urnair, Said ibn jubair, and Said ibn Musaiyid. We should be well advised to study their history, scrutinize their life stories and follow in their footsteps.

Movement-Oriented A person who lives for Islam will work with other like-minded people. Believing in Islam means to work in solidarity with others in an activist movement, directed toward teaching the truths of Islam, enjoining right and combatting wrong, establishing the Islamic personality and family, and establishing the Islamic community with Islamic governance. Allah, the almighty, has said:

[Allah to Moses], "We will certainly strengthen your arm through your brother." [Qur'an 28:35]

Help one another in righteousness and piety, but help not one another in sin and rancor. [Qur'an 5:2]

The Prophet (s) said:

A Muslim working with another Muslim may be compared to a strong building. Everybody is reinforcing each other.

Allah's help is with the community. Verily, a fox will eat only a sheep who is away from the community.

You must be with the Muslim community and their leader.

Togetherness is a blessing and disunity is destruction.

2.2. The Compulsory Nature of Islamic Activism

Working for Islam means to reform oneself so that one's life teaches others true belief and Islamic behaviour. Working for Islam equally means to form a society that is committed to the Islamic way of thinking and Islamic way of life, which means to form a government that implements principles of justice embodied in the shariah to guard the rights of every person and community, and establish truth and justice, and at the same time call others toward Islam - truth, peace, and justice.

These three responsibilities are obligatory not merely for the entire Muslim community but for every individual Muslim until we have established a system of governance adequate to the task. Until the nations of the world have functionally Islamic governments, every individual who is

careless or lazy in working for Islam is sinful. These sins of omission will not be forgiven until they take a quick action to carry out all their responsibilities and Islamic duties.

These responsibilities to change both oneself and the world are binding in principle, in law, in self-defense, in community and as a sacred obligation of jihad, as explained in this chapter.

2.2.1. In Principle

Working for Islam is a must in principle because it is the core of all the duties that have been prescribed by Allah for all human beings. This responsibility to work for Islam was enjoined by all prophets and messengers, for all human beings until the Day of Judgement. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

I swear by the declining day, that man is in loss, except those who have faith and do righteous deeds and counsel one another to follow the truth and counsel one another to be steadfast. [Qur'an 103:1-3]

On those who conceal the clear (signs) We have sew down our guidance, after We have it clear for the people in the Book, shall be the curse of Allah, and the curse of those entitled to curse them. [Qur'an 2:159]

In the sunnah of the Prophet (s) there are many narrations directly related to teaching the truth (dawah), enjoining the good, and forbidding evil. The Messenger of Allah (s) said:

Whosoever of you sees in evil action, let him change it with his hind, and if he is not able to do so, then with his tongue; and it-he is not able to do so. then with his bean - and that is the weakest of faith.[Trimidhi]

Oh mankind, verily Allah says: "Order them to do good and forbid them from doing evil [while they still have a chance] before (the time) when they will pray to Me but I will not answer, they will ask (something) from Me but I will refuse, and they will seek My help but I will not help them.

2.2.2. By Law

Working for Islam is a must from the Islamic point of view because the existing political and economic system and manmade laws operate functionally to deny the wisdom of Allah on earth. This denial makes it compulsory for every Muslim to establish 2 functionally Islamic society in every country on earth and to restore the Islamic way of life taught by 211 the prophets. It is also every Muslim's responsibility to remove all impediments to the worship of Allah alone, by every human being in belief, behavior and social life. Allah, the Almighty, has said.

By your Lord, they can have no (real) faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them. and find in their souls no resistance against your decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction. [Qur'an 4:65]

In whatever you disagree among yourselves, the decision is with Allah. [Say therefore] "Such is Allah, my Sustainer; in Him I trust and to Him I turn." [Qur'an 42:10]

If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah has revealed, they are (no better than) unbelievers. [Qur'an 5:44]

If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah has revealed, they are (no better than) wrong-doers. [Qur'an 5:45]

If any do fail to judge by (the light of) what Allah has revealed, they are (no better than) those who rebel. [Qur'an 5:47]

Since transforming every society into a functionally Islamic community and governing in accordance with the law of Allah, the Almighty, is a must, therefore every effort to accomplish these goals, according to the shari'ah is also a must. Whenever the accomplishment of something compulsory is impossible without accomplishing something else, that prior accomplishment is also compulsory.

The Muslim countries have been ruled by manmade systems with elements borrowed from the Romans, Chinese, French and many other cultures. The economic systems in these countries are capitalistic, Socialist, or a mixture of both evils. This overlay of secular cultures makes it all the more necessary to abolish all traces of such primitive life (labiliyya) and to reinforce the understanding and application of the eternal and universal Islamic din until it becomes the ruling power throughout the world.

The application of the Islamic din depends on the elected ruler or leader. Their election depends on the existence of Islamic power, which alone can implement the shari'ab as an Islamic system throughout society in every field, whether it be economics, family law, war, disarmament, or international law, or any other, throughout the world.

2.2.3. Self-Defense

Working for Islam is necessary to counter attacks from every materialistic ideology and system that threatens the existence of Islam as a global paradigm of thought and system of life. In most of the Muslim world today it is necessary in self-defense to form an Islamic opposition. From a legal (fiqhi) perspective such an organized effort is obligatory.

Many Muslim countries suffer from the oppression of non-believing occupiers, such as Palestine, Kashmir, Eritrea, Cyprus, Bukhara, Samarkand, and many more. Other Muslim countries suffer from the brutality of an evil minority, which governs through the iron-fist. In still others, the Muslims complain of the cruelty inflicted on them

because they either are controlled by the left or right wing or must suffer from bloody wars between the two.

This general situation is so acute because the whole Muslim ummah or global community is still living in a crisis of political, economic and social ignorance, oppressed by overall decadence in values, thought and behavior.

The very extreme of these general and local conditions proves that Working for Islam is necessary and compulsory in self-defense against the external machinations of secular powers and against the collaboration internally between these enemies and their local puppets. The Qur'an says:

And fight them until there is no more tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in Allah. [Qur'an 8:39]

2.2.4. In Community

The responsibility to work for Islam is the personal duty of every Muslim. As in the case of every Islamic duty one is rewarded if and only if one fulfills these responsibilities, and one is punished for neglecting them. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

Every soul will be (held) in pledge for its deeds. [Qur'an 74:38]

And everyone of them will come to Him singly on the Day of Judgement. [Qur'an 19:95]

No bearer of burdens shall be made to bear the burden of another. [Qur'an 6:164]

And if any strive (with might and main), they do so for their own soul. [Qur'an 29:6]

Allah has made every human being responsible to sacrifice according to his own ability and limitations in organizing and developing one's life, on condition that one has reached adulthood, and is of sound mind and body. Each of these persons, with responsibilities appointed by Allah, are to form a society and operate as a living cell so that each person will participate in building the truth and see this as compulsory. Each person in the community then will give freely of his or her own talents and compete to do whatever work is needed. From this we see why personal work for Islam is an Islamic duty.

Just as working for Islam is compulsory for each person, there is a collective obligation of the community to act in a movement of solidarity to carry out its specific responsibilities. This collective obligation is necessary for a number of reasons.

The responsibilities and duties to work for Islam are too big a load for one person, because the goal is to obliterate jahiliyyah (evil ways and systems of thought and life) down to their roots and replace it with the truth of Divine Revelation. This requires sacrifice, energy and power in amounts not possible from one man alone, even working to his fullest capacity and with maximum effort and unlimited readiness to suffer. This obligation can be carried out only by an organization that has a certain level of consciousness and organizational capability to confront the existing evil systems. The fact that working for Islam is a collective responsibility is borne out by the life-example of the Prophet (s) and his companions, who faced the jahiliyyah together in order to form a society that could follow the teaching of Islam and preserve the Islamic way of life. The life-example of the Prophet (s) proves that he did not operate as an individual, but rather realized the importance of forming a community right at the beginning. He chose the right people to form the new community, and he trained each member of the community until he or she was strong and able to carry out the process of transformation. The path of Islamic activism is full of hardship because, as Syed Qutb said, the devil is at work wherever good Muslims are active. The challenges are great and there are so many evil powers always looking to use them as weapons to destroy Islam and its followers. These challenges, make it necessary to build an organized movement of sufficient size and quality to carry on every level of Islamic work and also to handle unexpected situations and needs. The Qur'an and hadith of the Messenger of Allah (s), demonstrated repeatedly that working for Islam in an organized group is a necessity. Allah, the Almighty, has said: Help one another in righteousness and piety, but help not one another in sin and rancor. [Qur'an 5:5]

2.2.5. In Jihad

Those who work for Islam must be clear that they need Islam more than anyone else. They should be aware that when they are working, striving, and fighting for Islam this is an opportunity granted by Allah to purify their souls so that they will be rewarded by Allah in the Hereafter. On the Day of judgement, all eyes will be cast down and their souls will be in utter humiliation because of their fear of punishment.

Those who continue working for Islam are the ones who will prosper and those who withdraw will be in terrible loss. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

For Allah does not stand in need of anything in all the worlds. [Qur'an 29:6]

If you turn back (from the path), He will substitute in your stead another people; then they will not be like you! [Qur'an 47:38]

Muslims should realize that their self-value derives only from Islam, without which they are like animals or worse. They must know however, that true honor can never be achieved unless they continue actively to involve themselves in the Islamic Movement. Those who remain in isolation will be in the Hellfire. Those who join in the Islamic Movement are joining themselves with an honorable people. They are the enlightened, the -prophets- and the -martyrs- on whom Allah, the Almighty, bestows his

blessings. How fortunate they are!

They should know that constancy in solidarity with the community is a condition for being steadfast. As the Prophet (s) said:

Verily, a wolf will eat a sheep only when it is separated (from the herd).

Living in a decadent society is like being lost on a dark night. Those who are far from the advice of their companions in Islam and from encouragement to be patient and virtuous cannot survive in jahili society without being influenced by the surrounding filth. In the Qur'an, we read:

But teach (your message), for teaching benefits the believers. [Qur'an 51:55]

I swear by the declining day, that man is in loss, except those who have faith and do righteous deeds and counsel on another to follow the truth and to be steadfast. [Qur'an 103:1-3]

Therefore, Muslims are required always to live within the faithful family of Islam and to unite in the ummah under the banner of Islam, to transform the world. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

And keep your soul content with those who call on their Lord morning and evening, seeking His presence: and let not your eyes pass beyond them, seeking the pomp and glitter of this life; and pay no heed to one whose heart We have permitted to neglect the remembrance of Us, one who follows his won desires, and whose [transgressions] have gone beyond all bounds. [Qur'an 18:28]

Muslims should never forget that they are striving for Allah, the Almighty. The path to Allah is long and full of hardship. Heaven is surrounded by unpleasant obstacles while Hell is surrounded by everything pleasant to human lusts.

The road is difficult for those who fear to lose their money and secure future. The end of the road can never be reached by those who love leisure and pleasure, by the narrow minded and weak, the impatient and stingy, the arrogant and lazy, and by those who refuse to support what has been decided in the community.

The path of Islamic activism purifies and liberates a person and teaches one to he strong. It is a path of blessings and honor, but it requires patience and endurance, honesty, and sincerity. A path with these characteristics can be traversed only by those who are confident of the truth, and who rely on Allah always and everywhere. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

And if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is [Allah] for him. For Allah will surely accomplish His purpose; verily all things has Allah appointed in due proportion. [Qur'an 65:3]

Then anyone who violates his oath, does so to the harm of his own soul, and if anyone fulfills what he has covenanted with Allah, Allah will soon grant him a great reward. [Qur'an 49:10]

2.3. The Islamic Movement: Its Task, Characteristics and Tools

The duty of the Islamic movement is to help people submit to Allah as individuals and groups by working for the establishment of an Islamic community deriving its rules and teachings from the book of Allah and His Prophets' sunnah.

2.3.1. The General Task: Universal Outreach

The Islamic movement is a universal organization that reaches out to encompass the workers in the Islamic field all over the world. This outreach is a precondition for success in conveying purely and clearly the Islamic message in ways relevant to the needs of the present time. This outreach is designed to call people to Islam, strengthen their belief in it, and organize them to work and to wage jihad in its cause.

In order to establish Islam functionally in the world the Islamic movement must strive against the thoughts and philosophies left over from colonialism, whether of European socialism or American capitalism, until the Ummah or Muslim community can recover its independence and genuine identity. From the very inception, the Islamic movement has been almost obsessed with the need to purify Islam from the garbage of unlawful innovations and superstitions, and to introduce it to the people of the world in a pure form worthy of its excellence and greatness above all contending religions and ideologies.

The Islamic Movement is rooted in some basic principles, namely, that:

Islamic teachings and rules are comprehensive and designed by Allah to govern the affairs of man at all levels of community, from the family to the whole of the human race. The fundamental theme of Islam throughout history has been -there is no god but Allah,- which means, that Allah alone is Divine and Sovereign. Islam alone can provide the power for Muslims to liberate oppressed peoples from The control of those who worship the false gods of modernist and postmodernist cultures, namely, from taghut, so that these false gods will no longer be in a position to persecute or put obstacles in the way of sincere people and so all religion will be exclusively for Allah. The adoption and adaptation of capitalist, socialist, communist or other manmade systems, either in whole or in part, constitutes a denial of Islam and disbelief in Allah the Lord of the worlds. Such adoption and adaptation diverts Muslims into unguided, haphazard, and wasteful efforts. Allah, the Almighty, has said: If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to Allah), never will it be accepted of him and in the hereafter he will be in the ranks of those

who have lost (all spiritual good). [Qur'an 3:85]

Hasan AI-Banna summarized the Islamic movement's general task of universal outreach as follows:

Our task in general is to stand against the flood of modernist civilization overflowing from the swamp of materialistic and sinful desires. This flood has swept the Muslim nation away from the Prophet's leadership and Qur'anic guidance and deprived the world of its guiding light. Western secularism moved into a Muslim world already estranged from its Qur'anic roots, and delayed its advancement for centuries, and will continue to do so until we drive it from our lands. Moreover, we will not stop at this point, but will pursue this evil force to its own lands, invade its Western heartland, and struggle to overcome it until all the world shouts by the name of the Prophet and the teachings of Islam spread throughout the world. Only then will Muslims achieve their fundamental goal, and there will be no more "persecution" and all religion will be exclusively for Allah. "With Allah is the decision, in the past and in the future: on that day shall the believers rejoice." [Qur'an 30:4]

Within this general task, there are many specific duties. The Islamic movement must develop:

1. Internal governance sensitive to Allah's command:

   Judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and follow not their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile you from any of the (teachings) that Allah has sent down to you. [Qur'an 5:52]

2. Public relations designed to carry out Allah's injunctions:

   Thus have We made you a community justly balanced, that you may be a witness over the nations. [Qur'an 2:143]

3. A practical judicial system reflecting the authority of Islamic law:

   By your Lord, they can have no (real) Faith, until they make you judge in all disputes between them, and find in their souls no resistance against your decisions, but accept them with the fullest conviction. [Qur'an 4:65]

4. Military defense adequate to all demands in accordance with Allah's decree: "Go forth, (whether equipped) lightly or heavily, and strive and struggle with your goods and your persons in the cause of Allah. This is best for you, if You (only) knew. [Qur'an 9:41]

5. Economic institutions and policies designed to foster the production of wealth through broadly-based private ownership with proper regulation to avoid concentration of either economic or political power.

   To those of weak judgement do not entrust your property which Allah has made a means of support for you. [Qur'an 4:5]

6. Educational and cultural infrastructure designed to overcome ignorance and evil and to carry out the instruction of Allah in the first revealed verse of the Qur'an:

   Proclaim! (or read!) in the name of your Lord and Cherisher who created. [Qur'an 96:1]

7. Family values to shape and train the character of young boys and girls, in accordance with the saying of Allah, "O you who believe! Save yourself and your families from a fire whose fuel is men and stones." [Qur'an 66:6]

8. Spiritual encouragement so that in their private lives people find it easier to advance in wisdom and in peace of soul: "Truly he succeeds who purifies it." [Qur'an91:9]

9. Personal empowerment to bring alive as civil activists every person in society, either as a leader or follower, according to the saying of Allah, "But seek, with the (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, and do not forget your just enjoyment of this world; but do good as Allah has been good to you and avoid occasions for mischief in the land." [Qur'an 28:77]

10. Leadership at all levels of human community, in the family, neighbourhood, national government and international institutions, in order to bring together Muslims everywhere so they can excel again in all endeavors, and recover the flag of jihad and call mankind to Allah and the good news of His Revelation.

2.3.2. General Characteristics

The most important features or characteristics of the Islamic movement required for it to carry out this general task are the following five:

1. Guided by Allah

   The direction and methods of the movement must come from the eternal religion of Allah. The movement serves Allah and not its members, in accordance with Allah's teaching:

   Say: Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and death, are all for Allah, the Cherisher of the worlds. [Qur'an 6:162]

   The Islamic movement is not a political party that aims to gain or achieve some vested interest or power

as is common in ordinary parties. Its leaders are expected to obey only the commands of Allah.

2. Self Motivated

   This movement originates in the reality of Islam and not in reaction to or as an outgrowth of the socialism and capitalism of the secular West. The movement calls only to Islam, the true religion, which fact is its major source of power.

3. Growth-oriented

   The Islamic movement is designed to liberate man in dynamic change, not enslave him in efforts to stabilize and control the world, as do most utopian movements, including capitalism, in the West. Unlike these secular manmade systems, the Islamic movement addresses human needs and everyday problems from the spiritual and moral perspective of Revelation. It stands in awe of the universe, every aspect of which is merely a sign from its Creator and therefore promotes science and technology not to gain power or to register new discoveries but to learn more about the greatness of Allah.

   The Islamic movement promotes progress in developing improved tools of economic growth because Muslims are enjoined to multiply the bounties of Allah and benefit from all that is good. This is the essential meaning of the Prophet's saying:

   "Take wisdom from whatever container it comes from," and "Knowledge is what every Muslim should seek the most; wherever he finds it, he is the one who most deserves it."

4. Comprehensive and balanced

   The Islamic movement addresses all the needs of man in proper balance. Therefore it is referred to as:

   (a) Salafi da'wah, because it derives from the pure sources of Islam, the Qur'an and sunnah;
   (b) The Sunni way, because it works to revive the sunnah of the Prophet (s) in its members and in every human community;
   (c) The Rabbani covenant, because it teaches that a pure and clean heart and a close relationship with Allah are the basis and origin of all good; and
   (d) The Political movement, because it tries to address everyone's needs by changing both public policy and the institutions of society from which such policy issues.

5. Unity in diversity

   The Islamic movement recognizes the legitimacy of different positions on public issues, but it requires unity in basic principles (usul), and seeks to bring people together around the fundamentals of Islam. In the words of Imam Hasan AI-Banna:

   We are not a political party, although politics in accordance with Islam is deeply rooted in our ideas; and we are not a welfare organization nor a sports team, although welfare and sports are part of our method; we are not any of these because these are all forms, techniques, or means designed for specific objectives and for a limited period of time.

   We are, however, an idea and a creed, a system and a syllabus, which is why we are not bounded by a place or a group of people and can never be until the Day of judgement, because we are the system of Allah and the way of His Prophet (s).

   We are the followers of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah, and the Raisers of his flag as they raised it, and like them, popularizers of his way, and the memorizers of the Qur'an as they memorized it, and the preachers of his da'wah as they preached it, which is why we are a mercy for mankind.

2.3.3. Organizational Characteristics

In addition to these five general characteristics, the Islamic movement must have seven specifically organizational ones, namely:

1. Freedom from the special Interests of politicians and powerbrokers, especially those who dominate the government.

   This organizational independence, however, does not preclude members of the movement from holding political and appointive office as long as they work to protect the movement from harm and to secure its sincerity of intent and purity of action.

2. Gradualism In both thoughts and action, because the road to success is hard and long and the goals are ambitious and grandiose. The gradualist strategy pursues these goals through a tactic of incremental steps, each planned to build on the previous step in a carefully optimized time frame. Imam Hasan al-Banna in his Instructional Discourse divided the stages of da'wabinto three stages:

   (a) Introductory: Disseminating concepts and ideas among the people through oratory and writing, civic action and other practical methods.

(b) Preparatory: Identifying good and reliable cadre to bear the burden of initiating and sustaining jihad. This is a period of building wisdom among the leaders and military discipline among the recruits. At this stage no one will be admitted to the movement except those willing to carry out their responsibilities in full obedience.

(c) Execution: The stage of relentless combat and constant effort to achieve the goals. This stage will weed out all but the most honest and sincere, both in their own commitment and in their obedience to the chain of command. [Risalat Ta'alim (Arabic)]

(d) Low-Profile, with a maximum of productive action and a minimum of publicity, in order to:

i. Purify action from the desire to he seen and praised by others;

ii. Save energy and time for productive and constructive action; and

iii. Ensure the safety of the movement and its members. The Prophet Muhammad (s) said, "Seek secrecy in what you do."

3. Strategic orientation for long-range victory. The hugeness of the task ensures that the way will be long and hard, so the people working in this field should prepare themselves both mentally and physically to meet any hardship and to sacrifice:

Do men think that they will be left alone on saying we believe, and that they will not be tested? We did test those before you, and Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false. [Qur'an 29:1-3]

Members of the Islamic Movement should adopt and follow a long term plan so they do not lose the way or seek the fruit before it is ripe. This requires a full understanding that securing power for an Islamic government is a means for a larger goal, so when they gain power they will thank Allah and not retreat from their task out of fear. "There is no help except from Allah;" [Qur'an 2:26] and "You will not, except as Allah wishes." [Qur'an 76:30]

If someone retorts: "But crooks and tools of outside interests gain power a lot faster and more easily," then reply that the two ways are different and the Islamic Movement will accept power only clearly gained in justice. If it would accept the reins of power held by others, it would have gained a false and fraudulent power, as have so man others. "Now then, for that (reason) call (them to the faith) and stand steadfast as you are commanded, and do not follow their vain desires."

4. Openness in work but secrecy of organization. One may not work for Islam in secret, or through a front, and still claim to exhibit wisdom. The message of Islam should be broadcast from the housetops and the truth should be witnessed always and everywhere Those who hide the truth through silence are not merely dumb but evil. "Whoever sees a wrong-doing should change it by his hand; if he cannot, by his tongue; and if he still cannot then by his heart, arid that is the weakest of faith." Those who call to Allah should proclaim the truth at their place of work and to all around them in every way. Allah says, "Invite (all) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching." [Qur'an 16:125]

This does not mean, however, that the Islamic Movement should reveal all its strategies, plans, and organization, because this would be foolhardy and put the movement and its members in danger. The slogan should be, "Work in public but organize in secret" which accords with the Prophet saying. "Seek secrecy in what you do", and "War is dissimulation."

5. Psychological independence. There has been much discussion about the -feeling of isolation- that Syed Qutb called for when he said, "There should be a group that takes the lead and proceeds alone in the middle of the ignorance found everywhere on this earth. This group should be in this environment but isolated from it, and should not be of this environment, though it should communicate with it."

The concept of isolation referred to here by Syed Qutb is distinct from the nihilist or rejectionist isolation of many non-Muslim groups. Muslims are isolationist in the sense of psychological independence, based on the manner and behavior, and of their feelings. This is what the Prophet (s) called when he warned: "Do not be a follower who says, I am with the people right or wrong. But maintain disciplined behavior, so when people do good, you should too and when they do evil, you should avoid it."

Effective work, movement, and da'wah are not possible if one is physically isolated and out of contact with people, because one must be sensitive to their differences and tailor one's approach accordingly. These people who are committed to Islam as individuals but reject the duties of work in a movement must be approached in one way. Some people are open enemies of Allah and his Messenger (s), both as individuals and as members and leaders of non-believing groups. Other people are proud of being Muslims but do not live in accordance with

its rules. These people, who represent the majority of Muslims today, cannot be equated with those who deny non-believers. Each group must be addressed distinctly and with the personal knowledge that comes from communication.

The message of the callers to Islam should be adapted to the closeness or distance of the potential audience, to their acceptance or rejection of the message, and to their friendship or enmity. Some of them need awareness, education, and guidance, while others, as a last resort in self-defense need the sword. This flexibility requires the callers to Islam to remain in contact with all elements of society. This relationship should aim at affecting the others positively, while avoiding a negative effect on oneself, and at purifying their lives while avoiding contamination of one's own. The Prophet (s) said: "The patience of one of you (in jihad) is better than (worshipping) Allah for 60 years."

6. Moral consistency. For a Muslim the end never justifies the means, no matter what the aggravation. Unlike most un-Islamic movements, who are machiavellian even in excess of their own teachings, the Islamic movement must be principled in action.

   How many people or parties actually practice what they preach in either the executive or legislative branch of government? These people and parties do not subscribe to a spiritual and moral creed designed to protect them from the hypocrisy endemic in the arena of politics.

   The interests of secular people change and are translated into party programs, and these are often directed toward the self-serving advantage of party leaders, who sell out the interests of their supporters for personal gain. They gain power easily and manipulate it even more easily, because they are not constrained by religious and moral obligations. Instead they have objectives, strategies, and tactics that need to he accomplished regardless of the cost.

   In contrast, the laborers in the Islamic field do not work for themselves. They are bound by religious and moral obligations, which they cannot discard or change.

   This characteristic of moral consistency is based on five principles:

   (a) Islamic work must not be contaminated by any un-Islamic means in pursuit of its goals and objectives, even if these means be only words or slogans.

       Say: The truth's from your Lord, let him who will, believe and let him who will, reject it. [Qur'an 18:29]

   (b) Islam is an organic whole and cannot be partitioned. Giving up part of it is abandoning it all. We need only recall the story of the "Quraish" when they made the Prophet Muhammad (s) a very tempting offer in return for giving up part of the Message of Islam. Allah instructed him to refuse their offer:

       Say O you who reject faith, I do not worship what you worship, nor do you worship what I worship, and I will not worship what you have ever worshipped, nor will you ever worship what I worship. To you be your way, and to me mine. [Qur'an 109:1-6]

   (c) Islam requires major effort and sacrifice. The magicians of Pharaoh when they learned the truth of Allah from the Prophet Moses (s), ignored Pharaoh's threats and replied, "Never shall we regard you as more than our Creator. So decree whatever you desire to decree: for you can only decree [what concerns] the life of this world." [Qur'an 20:72]

       When the Prophet (s) was offered kingship, honor, and money merely to slacken somewhat his efforts and compromise his message, he refused and said,

       By Allah, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left to abandon this call, I will not until Allah gives victory to this din or I die struggling for it.

   (d) Righteous people must on guard against those of the non-Muslims who have a disease in their hearts, and the righteous must remain close to Allah so they cannot be easily swayed or accept the imposition of unsuitable solutions. "And this (He commands), judge between them by what Allah has revealed, and do not follow their vain desires, but beware of them lest they beguile you from any of the (teaching) that Allah has sent down to you. And if they turn away, be assured that for some of their crimes it is Allah's purpose to punish them, for truly most men are rebellious." [Qur'an 5:52]

       When Ka'ab ibn Malik, the famous companion of the Prophet, was approached by an envoy of the king of Gassan with a letter from the king which read, "We know that your friend is treating you harshly (the Prophet had ordered a social boycott of the three Muslims, including Ka'ab ibn Malik, for failing to join the expedition of Tabuk, and no one was allowed to speak to them), so come and join us." When Ka'ab

read it, he said, "this is another test." He realized that his situation had reached the point where a non-believer wanted to convert him to fight the Prophet, so he burned the letter.

(e) Truth and knowledge of right and wrong can he known only from revelation, not from human reason alone, and one must accept divinely revealed truth even it be against one's will. From the Islamic perspective, dishonesty and cheating people, regardless of how small the matter, is hypocrisy. The Prophet (s) said "The one who pleases people by making Allah angry will receive from Allah only humiliation, and the one who pleases Allah but thereby makes people angry will receive from Allah only honor." The Prophet also said, "Do not be a follower who says, I am with the people, right or wrong. But maintain disciplined behavior, so when people do good, you should too, and when they do evil, you should avoid it."

2.3.4. Tools of the Islamic Movement

Imam Hasan AI-Banna proclaimed that, "Our tools are the tools of our righteous predecessors, and our weapons are what our guide and leader, the Prophet Muhammad (s) and his companions used to address the world, despite their limited number and resources. These tools are five.

1. A deep internal love of Allah and belief in His help and His support. "If Allah helps you, none can overcome you: if He forsakes you, who is there, after that, that can help you? [Qur'an 3:160]

2. A conviction that the Qur'an is a universally applicable guide. "There has come to you from Allah a (new) light and a perspicuous Book, with which Allah guides all who seek His good pleasure to ways of peace and safety." [Qur'an 5:17-18]

3. A strong sense of the rights and importance of brotherhood. "The believers are but a single brotherhood." [Qur'an 49: 10]

4. Firm reliance on Allah's love and justice. -Because all their sufferings and efforts were reckoned to their credit as deeds of righteousness whether they suffered thirst, or fatigue, or hunger, in the cause of Allah, or took any steps that angered or confounded the unbelievers, or sustained any injury whatever from an enemy; for Allah does not fail to give a just reward to those who do good. [Qur'an 9:120]

5. Supreme confidence that they are among those chosen by Allah to bring truth, justice, and peace to the world.

Our predecessors in faith heard the call to Allah, so they believed, and we pray that Allah will make this faith beloved to us as it was to them because this love of Allah and Islam is our faith. Our faith is our greatest strength and our most powerful tool; it is also the source of the second most powerful instrument of the Islamic movement, which is jihad. The companions of the Prophet (s) knew that Islam prevails only through the sacrifice of self and wealth in jihad, and they were right.

They heard the call of Allah, "Say, if your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your mates, or your kindred, or the wealth that you have gained in commerce and fear to lose, or the dwellings in which you delight, are dearer to you than Allah or His Messenger, or striving in His cause, then wait until Allah brings about His decision, for Allah guides not the rebellious." They answered the call and offered everything willingly, rejoicing in their bargain with Allah Almighty.

When they fought in the Cause of Allah, they fought to death. Some donated all their resources, saying we have kept for our families only Allah and His Messenger, while others exclaimed while the sword was readied above their necks, "Strike on either side. It makes no difference as long as I die as a Muslim for the sake of Allah." As they were committed in battle and magnanimous in sacrifice, so shall we be.

2.4. Distinguishing the Movement from Specialized Organizations

Those who join the Islamic movement should do so after careful study, so that they know how it differs from all other Islamic organizations, both in goals and methods, and can distinguish between Islamic and non-Islamic groups. There are four kinds of organizations with inadequately universal goals:

First, there are spiritual groups. Most of these groups stress personal spiritual growth but neglect other essential aspects of Islam, such as thought, politics, strategic planning, and work. Such inner-directed groups may become isolated and unable to understand the environment in which they live. Therefore they cannot directly influence or change the environment.

Second, are ecumenical groups. These groups exist in order to address problems jointly with Christians and Jews. These groups usually restrict their goals to the limitations imposed by non-Muslims. Because to that extent, they are non-Islamic and will give a distorted image of Islam.

Third, are welfare organizations. These organizations were formed in order to help those in need of various kinds

of help, such as medical, financial, and shelter. Although they have done a good job in their fields - these jobs are required by Islam - they are restricted in their work to their goals. These groups cannot be considered as a movement of reformation, because their goals are not to establish an Islamic society nor to move forward to the Islamic way of life.

Fourth, are political movements. They may operate under the name of Islam, but they rarely base their work on the Islamic creed or principles. In some situations, these political movements, without hesitation, violate the principles of Islam. They justify this by claiming that they want to exhibit the flexibility of Islam or pursue the general good of the people. They rely on the non-believers and on man-made systems of government, and usually focus on insignificant matters of marginal value.

None of these four groups work for the real and comprehensive objective of Islam, which is to transform the jahili society into an Islamic community in order to save the world from the false gods of modernism rampant in Western civilization by building the human person, family, community, and government in the Islamic mold.

The work of all these organizations is deficient and incomplete. Some of these groups even condemn Islam, although, they claim to work under the name of Islam. The compartmentalization of being and action on which these groups are based give the erroneous impression that Islam is similarly based on such erroneous premises. This implies that man-made systems are acceptable, which will only prolong their life.

Any groups, no matter what their names are, in any country who work under the name of Islam, with a goal of preparing or establishing a complete change in all aspects of society are indeed the right groups to join because all of their work converges on a single understanding and on common goals and methods.

Imam Hasan AI-Banna clarified the characteristics of the group that best works for Islam by saying:

My brothers, you are not a welfare organization, nor a political party; you are not a limited-goals organization, but a new spirit that moves in the nerves of people. Your are the new light that will destroy the darkness of materialism. You are the voices that echo the message of Prophet Muhammad (s).

2.5. The Nature of the Commitment

Every member of the Islamic movement must be committed, if it is to succeed. Commitment goes far beyond the formalities of filling out a membership form, registering one's name, and going back and forth to the headquarters to attend gatherings; but it has a deeper meaning which goes beyond formalities. Commitment must be based on a common philosophy of life, a common creed or aqidah, common hopes for the future and on coherent blending of thought, organization, and action.

2.5.1. The Creed (aqida)

The first task of a movement member is to absorb its aqidah (or ideology). The Islamic Movement, unlike some organizations, does not accept superficial submission to the leadership structure, because it would eventually destroy the organization itself.

Commitment to an Islamic Movement means being a committed Muslim, that is, to obey all of the commandments of Allah and hope for His mercy. This type of commitment can easily survive the death or loss of Movement leaders because the commitment has always been only to Allah. Only in this way the Islamic Movement becomes a permanent movement. Whoever worships Muhammad, may the blessings and peace of Allah be upon him, he should know that he is dead, but whoever worships Allah the Almighty, he should remember that He is alive and will never die. Allah, the Almighty, says:

Verily those who pledge their allegiance to you do no less than pledge their allegiance to Allah. The Hand of Allah is over their hands. Hence anyone who violates his oath, does so to the harm of his own soul, and if anyone fulfills whathe has covenanted with Allah, Allah will soon grant him a great reward. [Qur'an 48:10]

The Islamic Movement rejects any commitment undertaken only through enthusiasm. This is because Islam is a way of thought and life that contains a definite understanding about the universe, mankind, and daily life. Moreover working for Islam has the goal of establishing an Islamic way of life in society. This has to be done according to a clear understanding and careful ' planning. Therefore personal change based on faith and knowledge is the first requirement for committing oneself to an Islamic movement. This requirement must be thoroughly understood so that one will never look back once a commitment has been made to the Movement. Steadfastness in da'wah sufficient to guarantee one's permanent commitment to the Movement and to achieve its goals requires deep understanding and a true perception of what such commitment means. Those who fall or quit are those who committed themselves through enthusiasm or under outside pressure without understanding the purpose or appreciating the implications of their commitment.

The Islamic Movement also rejects any commitment based on self-interest, whereby this commitment is merely a stepping-stone to gain a particular goal, a material benefit or access to people.

True commitment encourages surrender and sacrifice, so that one's skills and efforts are always at the disposal of the Movement and Islam. Intention is very important, because committing oneself to the Islamic Movement is just

another name for committing oneself to the cause of Islam itself. One's heart and self must be cleansed and purified from all self-interest. The Prophet (s), said:

Actions are judged only by intention and every man shall have only what be intended. Thus if one's migration was for Allah and His Messenger, one's migration will be for Allah and His Messenger, and if one's migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some women in marriage, then ones migration is what he migrated for. [Bukhari and Muslims]

2.5.2. Common Future

Commitment to the Movement requires also binding one's future to the future of the Movement. One's commitment must not he limited to a certain period or bounded by a certain situation, whereby one's commitment ends whenever the period expires or the situation changes. This would rule out any commitment to the Movement when one is young and single with the idea that one might quit when one becomes older or gets married or a commitment when one is poor or in difficulty but with the thought that one might quit when one becomes rich and has overcome one's difficulties; or "commitment" in time of peace but not during tribulations or hardship.

Commitment to the Movement must he a lasting one. Such a commitment ends only when one meets Allah in the Hereafter. About the early generations of Muslims the Qur'an says:

There are among men such as say, "We believe in Allah," but when they suffer affliction in the (cause of) Allah, they treat men's oppression as if it were the wrath of Allah! And if help comes (to you) from your Lord, they are sure to say, "We have (always) been with you!" Does not Allah know best all that is in the hearts. of all creation? And Allah most certainly, knows those who believe and as certainly those who are hypocrites. [Qur'an 29:10-11]

There are among men some who serve Allah, as it were, on the verge; if good befalls them, they are therewith well content, but if a trial comes to them they turn on their faces; they lose both this world and the Hereafter, which is a lose for all to see. [Qur'an 22:11]

How many of the Prophets fought (in the cause of Allah) and with them large bands of godly men? But they never lost heart if they met disaster in the way of Allah, nor did they weaken (in will), nor give in. And Allah loves those who are firm and steadfast. All that they said was, "Our Lord! forgive us our sins and anything we may have done that transgressed our duty; establish our feet firmly, and help us against those that resist Faith." And Allah gave them a reward in this world and the excellent reward of the Hereafter. For Allah loves those who do good. [Qur'an 3:146-8]

Da'wah demands commitment, work and continuous jihad with steadfastness, patience, and sacrifice. And all the votaries of falsehood are always opposed to it. Allah, the Almighty, says:

And we shall try you until We test those among you who strive their utmost and persevere in patience, and We shall try your reported (mettle). [Qur'an 47:31]

Those who are really committed to the Movement can be distinguished from others by their moral and social behavior, because they live according to the principles of Islam in all circumstances and they engage in the work for Islam only to win the pleasure of their Lord. These characteristics, however, emerge only through a long process of purification. Allah, the Almighty, says:

The scum disappears like froth cast out, while that which is for the good of mankind remains on the earth. Thus does Allah set forth parables. [Qur'an 13:17]

Tribulations and trials from Allah will distinguish good from the bad, and will screen and cleanse those who are qualified for being the true vicegerents (khulafah) of Allah in this world, which is an exalted status, and no other creature was found fit to receive. Allah, the Almighty, said:

If a wound has touched you, be sure a similar would has touched the others. Such days (of varying fortunes) We give to men and women by turns so that Allah may know those who believe and may take to Himself from your ranks martyr-witnesses (to truth). And Allah loves not those who do wrong. Allah's object also is to purge those who are true in faith and to deprive of blessing those who resist faith. [Qur'an 3:140-1]

Basically, the callers to Islam face two types of temptations. The first one they face in the form of luxuries, such as wealth, status, power, and popularity. Allah, the Almighty, said:

Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet, women and sons, heaped-up hoards of gold and silver, horses branded (for blood and excellence), and (wealth) of cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life, but nearness to Allah is the best of all goals. Say, shall I give you glad tidings of things far better than those? For the God-conscious are Gardens in the presence of their Lord, with rivers flowing beneath; therein is their eternal home, with companions pure (and holy), and the good pleasure of Allah. For in Allah's sight are (all) His servants. [Qur'an 3:14-15]

The second one comes to them as adversity and hardship, threats, pressure, and torture. Many are imprisoned, tortured, and killed. Their activities are watched, and their means of livelihood blocked. In these situations, they must always be patient and steadfast until Allah gives them victory.

Men said to them, "a great army is gathering against you," and frightened them, but it only increased their faith. They said, "for us Allah suffices and He is best disposer of affairs." And they returned with grace and bounty from

Allah, and no harm ever touched them, for they followed the good pleasure of Allah, and Allah is the Lord of bounties unbounded. [Qur'an 3:173-4]

All these trials and temptations are a means of moral purification and improvement for the Muslim, just as fire is for rusty irons. Allah, the Almighty, says:

And we test you by evil and by good, by way of trial; to Us must you return. [Qur'an 21:35]

Imam Hasan AI-Banna says:

I want to make it clear to you that today our da'wah is still unknown. When people know and understand the objective of this da'wah, you will be hated and assailed by them. You will face a lot of difficulties and so you will be blocked. Only in this situation will you start to follow the way of true callers to Islam. Now you are unknown. You are in the stage of preparation to make da'wah and jihad required by Islam.

People's ignorance about Islam is one of the obstacles in your way. For instance, you will find that the so-called scholars of Islam will look down upon your understanding of Islam and will not support your jihad. Leaders, powercrazy people, and the like will never tolerate you. All kinds of leaders will together attack you and try to control your work. They will do anything to go against you and to put out the light of your da'wah. They will spread rumors about your da'wah by saying that it is deficient, deviant, and so forth. Allah the Almighty said: "Their intention is to extinguish Allah's light (by blowing) with their mouths, but Allah will complete (the revelation of) His light even though the unbelievers may detest (it)." (Qur'an 61:8).

No doubt, you will go through these tests. You will be apprehended, imprisoned, and exiled. All of your belongings will be taken, your jobs will be frozen, and your houses will be invaded. You might face these tribulations for quite a long period. Allah the Almighty said.. "Do men think that they will he left alone on saying, 'we believe,' and that they will not be tested?" (Qur'an 29:2).

But remember, after all of these tribulations, Allah has promised to help you and to reward those who strive to do good. Allah the Almighty said: "O you who believe shall I lead you to a bargain that will save you from a grievous penalty? That you believe in Allah and His Messenger and that you strive (your utmost) in the cause of Allah with your property and your persons, that will be the best for you if you but knew. He will forgive you your sins and admit you to Gardens beneath which rivers flow and to beautiful mansions in Gardens of Eternity; that is indeed the supreme achievement. And another (favor will He bestow) which you do love, namely, help from Allah and a speedy victory. So give glad tidings to the believers. O you who believe, be helpers of Allah, as said Jesus, the son of Mary, to the disciples, 'Who will be my helpers to (the work of) Allah?' The disciples said, 'We are Allah's helpers!' Then a portion of the Children of Israel believed and a portion disbelieved, but we gave power to those who believed against their enemies and they became the ones that prevailed."(Qur'an 61:10-14). [See the discourse, Between the Past and Present, under the subheading "Obstacles in the Way."]

2.6. Strategic Planning

The Islamic movement must be clear in its purpose, goals and strategies, and must distinguish them from subordinate objectives, courses of action and tactics.

2.6.1. Clear Goals

Clarity of purpose in the Islamic Movement is a source of strength for the fully committed. This purposiveness and coherent goals structure avoids wasted or inefficient effort and permits all one's abilities and strength to focus on the most effective Islamic work.

From study of Islamic methodology and analysis of texts of the Qur'an and hadith, and Islamic history, it is clear that the purpose of Revelation is for mankind to serve Allah, the Almighty, both individually and collectively. Men and women should be the servants of Allah not only while praying in the mosques but in their daily lives while earning a living or doing business; not only during their fasting, but also while they are governing. Not only when they make supplications to Allah but also when they sit in judgement on others.

Allah, the Almighty, says:

I have created Jinns and men only that They may [know, worship, and] serve Me. [Qur'an 51:56]

In other words, Muslims in an Islamic Movement are the true servants of Allah and their obedience is only to Allah, the Almighty, in all matters of life. It encompasses not only religious affairs but also worldly affairs. This is because Islam teaches its followers that there is no segregation or separation between religion and worldly affairs. Islam rejects the idea of secularism which is based on separation of religion and state in accordance with the superficial understanding of the supposed statement of the Prophet Jesus, peace be upon him, -Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's, which is translated into the idea that religion is for God (Allah) and the state is for everyone. The servitude of man means that he must reject all manmade philosophies and systems that by nature lead mankind to submit to the false gods of materialism.

Islam rejects totally all of these paradigms, systems and methods because:

1. It is clear that they transgress against Allah's rights and rules. Allah, the Almighty, says:

   The Command Rests with none but Allah. [Qur'an 6:57]

2. All such man-made concepts and practices cause weakness and failure. Therefore they are unable to bring out the true nature of mankind in the trials of life. Allah, the Almighty, says:

   Is then He Who creates like one that creates not? Will you not receive admonition? [Qur'an 16:17]

2.6.2. Clear Methods

Working for Islam means to establish Allah's rule on this earth, which means replacing man-made laws and systems of governance and problem-solving. Allah's rule is complete and comprehensive consisting of the greatness of its creed, the beauty of its moral teachings and the universal laws and methods that provide detailed guidance for every practical situation in life.

Since our ultimate goal is to replace the un-Islamic system with a total Islamic one, every effort that does not contribute toward achieving the goal of destroying the un-Islamic system is useless and will only prolong evil. Allah, the Almighty, says:

Now then, for that (reason), call (them to the Faith), and stand steadfast as you are commanded, and do not follow their vain desires. [Qur'an 26:15]

The method of work must be determined entirely by this overriding goal, because Islam has been revealed for the purpose of achieving this same goal. This method of work is clear from the path the Prophet (s) chose, to reach this goal.

The Islamic method used for this ultimate goal gives depth of meaning to our work. The Islamic Movement wants to bring all people to a state of total submission to Allah, the Almighty, in their practice, their interactions, their political and economic systems, their laws, -in every aspect of their lives.

Fundamental transformation of society requires actions that can change it at its very roots. The Islamic Movement therefore must reject every cosmetic act or process of putting band-aids on the wounds of the fundamentally flawed societies of materialism. The Islamic Movement must reject un-Islamic methods and refuse to coexist with any man-made ideologies.

As to its method four things are critical to the Movement's Success. It must be:

1. Comprehensive

   The scope and focus of all Movement work should include four elements in order to be comprehensive. These are implementation of thought and political strategy, organization and tactical planning, human preparation, and the manpower and weapons. These elements should be separated from each other, because they are complementary and mutually reinforcing in every effort to pursue the ultimate goal. Allah, the Almighty, says:

   And fight them until persecution is no more and religion is all for Allah. [Qur'an 8:39]

2. Universal

   The Movement must be universal in its planning, organization, and implementation, in the sense that it is active everywhere, in every country and throughout every society. Islam is a universal system of thought and action. It goes beyond the boundaries of country, nationality, family, and language. This system is unique in the sense that it covers all aspects of thought and governance, with the flexibility essential for effective implementation. This has made Islam the only system capable of offering solutions to the problems of life wherever or whenever they may arise.

   The universality of Islamic teachings can be seen through the development of an Islamic community that reaches out to a great portion of the world, and preserves the beliefs, values and methods of effective action.

   The universality of the Islamic work is essential and obligatory because our major problems are now global and interrelated. Therefore the Islamic Movement must be universal in its thinking, ideology, direction, and strength. All local problems have some universal characteristics and links with the broader external world.

   Therefore those who work for Islam must free themselves from thinking only about their local problem or from a local frame of reference.

   Duties and responsibilities of the Islamic movement are not limited to finding or providing solutions to the myriad of problems that arise in un-Islamic societies, e.g., in education, the mass media, food, clothing, politics, and economics. Islamic movements should get involved in these issues, but their involvement should focus on exposing the falsehood and the evil and the destruction caused by un-Islamic systems. This focus will undercut any efforts by un-Islamic rulers to exploit these issues in order to retain or consolidate their power.

   As an example, the Islamic movement should address the issue of inflation by identifying it as a natural result of monopoly capitalism, whose leaders can benefit from inflation to further narrow the ownership of the nation's wealth. Hence, the Islamic movement must explain to the public that property ownership in the means of production must be widely held in

order to be Islamic and that Islam is the only system of thought that recognizes the man's right of property ownership as the core of economic and social justice. The Islamic movement should not work together helping an un-Islamic system solve its problems without addressing their underlying causes, because cooperation in alleviating the effects of injustice only prolongs the power of an unjust system.

In addressing the Palestinian problems and all its injustices, the Islamic movement should point out the failure of all un-Islamic systems that have attempted to govern Palestine. These un-Islamic systems have failed to instill in the people the spirit and the feeling of struggling in the path of Allah and have failed to free the land that has been usurped by transgressors. The Islamic movement should also build the belief, trust and pride in Islam as the only method capable of preparing and molding the ummah to face with fortitude any difficulties in the struggle of justice.

3. Faithful to the Way of the Prophet

   The Islamic movement should rely only on the methods the Prophet Muhammad (s) used, to achieve Islamic goals. In this regard we must remember that his methodology is the only correct way to move forward. The Prophet's life-example shows the right techniques of preaching, public relations, and working with people; it is a perfect model for confronting and defeating forces of ignorance (jahiliyyah).

   The life of the Prophet Muhammad (s), brings out four principles as the foundation of all our Islamic work:

   First, at the very beginning, the declaration of submission to Allah. Allah, the Almighty, says:

   In order that Allah may separate the impure from the pure. [Qur'an 8:37]

   This declaration was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (s), in many ways, all calling mankind to worship only Allah, in his sublimity, and divinity, in every aspect of life.

   Even though the Prophet (s) and his companions suffered various kinds of torture, but they never gave up and did not take the easy way out in practicing their beliefs and calling people to believe the Message and basic truths for which they struggled. Allah, taught the Prophet declare:

   Say: O you that reject Faith! I worship not what you worship, nor will you ,N,orship what I worship. And I will not worship what you have been wont to worship, nor will you worship what I worship. To you be your way, and to me mine. [Qur'an 109:1-6]

   Say, The Truth is from your Lord: let him who will believe, and let him who will, reject (it). [Qur'an 18:29]

   Second, the formation and mobilization of a group of people bound together by belief and faith in Allah, the Almighty, who obey the organization and its leadership and who perform their responsibilities with the guidance of Allah. Such a group is not diverted from the goals by the decision-making process nor by small matters and trivial problems. Rather they are more concerned with working and preparing themselves to achieve the goal of Islam in their allocation of time and effort. Their commitment to the future of Islam overcomes their own personal interests, as it did for those of Darul Arqam bin AI-Arqam, whose faith was firm, and for all the Companions of the Prophet, peace be upon him, who sacrificed in jihad in the Battles of Badr, Qadisiah, and Yarmuk.

   The history of the first generation, prepared and groomed by Muhammad, peace be upon him, is filled with this kind of countless brave and fearless heroes. Through this generation, Allah opened the doors for the Message of Islam. They are our forefathers [in Islam], so let us be like them.

   Third, carefully prepared all-out effort against the forces of ignorance. The Prophet (s), exercised such care because he knew that the central Islamic goal is to totally change all aspects of human life, especially thought and belief, the way of life, and the system of governance. This form of confrontation requires pioneers, who are strong in faith, well prepared, capable of carrying out their responsibilities, and ready for the greatest sacrifices in pursuing the great Islamic goal.

   Therefore the preparation has to be comprehensive and complete, encompassing worship and education in ways of thinking and knowledge, organization and planning, and training for jibad, both spiritual and physical. All of this preparation must be carried out according to priorities, based on the quantitative, qualitative and urgent needs of the particular stage.

4. Materially Strong

   A successful revolutionary movement requires a balance of material and non-material strength. Neglect of either leads to extremism, and extremism is strongly condemned in Islam.

   Imam Hasan AI-Banna explained the role of material strength in the strategy of the Islamic movement as follows:

Many people ask, "Does the Islamic movement plan to use its strength in achieving its goal?" "Does the Islamic movement have in mind a comprehensive or a complete revolution to replace the ruling system and other social systems that exist today?" Since I do not want to allow these questioners to continue in their state of confusion, I want to use this opportunity to answer those questions thoroughly and clearly.

The Qur'an says:

Against them make ready your strength to the utmost of your power, including steeds of war, to strike terror into [the hearts of] the enemies, of God and your enemies. [Qur'an 8:60]

The Prophet, peace be upon him, said: A strong believer is better and more loved by Allah than the weak believer.

Prayer for strength and the courage to use it is common in Islamic prayer. Thus, the Prophet (s), prayed for the strength of total concentration and calmness, and taught this prayer to his Companions:

Oh Allah, Oh my God, I seek refuge from you from the feeling of depression; I seek refuge from You from the feeling of cowardliness and stinginess, I seek refuge from you from the burden of debt and from suppression by those in power.

Our slogan is "strength in everything." Therefore, the Muslim Brotherhood must work from and with this strength.

The Islamic movement must be mature in its thinking and far sighted in its vision, so it will not be influenced by undue enthusiasm for the insignificant objectives of the shortsighted. We know that the most important strength is our faith and belief, followed in order by, the strength of togetherness, and the strength of manpower and weapons. No group can be strong without values. An organization or group with superficial strength in manpower and weapons, but disorganized or weak in faith, will lead itself to destruction.

Should the use of force he the initial solution or only if necessary, the choice of last resort in a final stage? How does one identify and evaluate the good or had results of the use or non-use of force in each stage of the systemic revolution to which all Muslims are called? The Islamic Movement should consider these questions carefully.

2.7. The Requirements of Bai'ah and Brotherhood

Every Muslim has the ability to help the Islamic movement in its course of Islamic work, but only by disciplining himself or herself as a member of the movement in the characteristics described in previous chapters of this book. This character-building can also be accomplished simply by experiencing the hardships faced by the Muslim community and other communities in society. Constructive action requires the members of the movement to rise above these hardships by understanding their causes and putting faith in the power of Islam (submission to Allah) to save mankind. Men and women can be asset to the Islamic Movement only when they have developed a balanced personality, i.e. developed a high level of humanity and internalized the rules of good character, so that they can submit fully to the principles and laws of Islam throughout their lives.

2.7.1. Quality Over Quantity

The first requirement is quality. Naturally the Islamic Movement will strive to increase its membership through every way acceptable in Islamic law (shari'ab). But, these ways exclude any effort to recruit members without considering the required conditions of membership, because the quality of the movement is more important than its quantity. The movement must expend much time and energy helping each new member fit into the movement so that he or she can start carrying the load of the movement's duties and responsibilities. The movement can not bear the burden of unproductive or even counterproductive members for long, because this would threaten its very survival. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

And on the of Day of Hunain, behold your great number elated you, but they availed you naught, for the land, despite all its vastness, did constrain you, and you turned back in retreat. [ ]

Large numbers are not decisively important. Priority should be given to those who really fear Allah, the Almighty, and are steadfast and submit totally in pursuing the truth. in certain situations, large numbers can even lead to defeat. When some of the people involved in the movement do not understand the truths of Islam or are not steadfast in observing its teaching, they may become unruly and clamorous during times of hardship, and in the midst of battle they may panic and suffer defeat in jihad.

The Movement therefore should evaluate and categorize every member, so that it can correctly assess his or her true strengths and design a developmental program tailor-made for each person. This does not mean that some members will be ignored as not worth anybody else's time, but rather that the Movement may provide sufficient awareness training and education until every member becomes steadfast and reliable.

2.7.2. Bai'ah and Shari'ah

Bai'ah means taking an oath of loyalty. Whoever makes bai'ah agrees to submit his entire life to the leader and the ummah. He will not act against the leader in agreed matters, and will be loyal to him in every action, regardless of his personal likes or dislikes.

Bai'ah is a tradition of the Prophet (s), such as the first and second bai'atal 'Aqabah and the bai'ah ar-ridwan . This kind of bai'ah was taken regularly after the death of the Prophet (s), whereby the Muslims pledged their loyalty to the leaders of the Muslim community.

Bukhari narrated from junadah ibn Abi Umaiyah who said that Ubadah ibn Shamit said: "The Prophet (s) called us, and we gave bai'ah to him. He asked us to promise, among other things, to obey in specific matters, whether we like it or not, and whether in happiness or hardship, and not to give priority to ourselves, and not to go against the orders of authority unless we see that they are clearly against Allah's rules and we have clear witness."

In his book, Fi al Din al Khair, Sadiq Hasan Khan writes, "This hadith evidences that it was a sunnah to ask the Companions to give bai'ah, and similarly the bai'ah given by the Companions was also a sunnah. To fulfill a bai'ah is a must (wajib) and to violate it is a sin (ma'asia).

In interpreting this hadith, Ibn Hajar said: "The words 'whether we like it or not,' refer to the situations where we are able to do something asked of us." Ad-Daudi said "It refers to something we hate." Ibn At-Tin said, "The obvious meaning concerns times of laziness and hardship." Ibn al-jauzi al Makki then said, "We should not oppose a Muslim government even though the government is cruel until it is clear that it is kufr (not Islam)."

We must obey the Islamic government in every legitimate matter, whether we like it or not, except when we are asked to commit sins. Only in this situation is it permissible to disobey the government. An honest person should be able to conclude from the above that it is a requirement for him to obey the leader.

2.7.3. Loyalty And Shari'ah Law

Loyalty includes obedience to legitimate orders and responsiveness to every request. When loyalty is not observed, there will be iniquity, oppression and persecution. The early signs of these may not be visible to a believer, and so he may feel that nothing is wrong. Therefore he must be careful not to let his speech or action become a source of trial (fitnah) for others and for himself.

Loyalty is a must so long as it is not sinful or an occasion of sin. Allah, the Almighty, has said:

O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey His Messenger and those charged with authority among you. If you differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger if you do believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is the best [for you] and best in the end. [Qur'an 4:59]

It is narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Prophet (s), said:

Those who obey me obey Allah, the Almighty. Those who disobey me disobey Allah, the Almighty. Those who obey my leader obey me and those who disobey my leader disobey me.

Bukhari related a hadith from Anas ibn Malik in which Anas said that the Prophet (s), said:

Listen and obey even though your leader is a slave from Ethiopia.

Bukhari also has recorded a hadith from Ibn Abbas that the Prophet (s), said:

Those who dislike something their leader does, must be patient with him because anyone who leaves the jama'ah (community) and later dies in that condition, he dies in jahiliyyah.

From Abdullah ibn'Umar, Bukhari relates that the Prophet (s), said:

To listen and obey is a must for every Muslim in every matter whether he likes it or not. But if he is asked to commit sin, then he is not under obligation to listen and obey.

Bukhari also narrated that 'Umar AI Khattab said:

There were many people during the time of the Prophet (s), who were punished on the evidence of Revelation. Now there is no more Revelation. We will punish you for what you do. Those who do good deeds, we will protect and trust them, for we have no right to assert what they intend to do. Allah, the Almighty, will judge intent, which is a matter of one's heart. Those who show bad deeds to us, we will not protect or trust, even though they might claim to have a good intention.

2.7.4. The Principles of Bai'ah

Involvement in the Islamic Movement means direct involvement in Islam. It also means a new compact or covenant with Allah, the Almighty, wherein one is committed to make jihad for the sake of Allah, the Almighty. Defining the principles of bai'ah, Imam Hasan AI Banna said:

Our principles of bai'ah are ten: understanding, sincerity, ibadah (worship), jihad (struggle), sacrifice, obedience, perseverance, integrity, brotherhood, and trust.

1. Understanding

   The first principle of Islamic bai'ah is the clear understanding that the philosophy of life, or ideology of the Islamic Movement is a purely Islamic ideology. This philosophy of life contains the following twenty sub-principles:

(a) Islam is a complete system and covers all aspects of life.

(b) The Qur'an and the sunnah of the Prophet (s), are the ultimate sources of reference for all Muslims.

(c) True faith, acceptable worship, and striving for the cause of Allah, the Almighty, are the lights and sweetness given by Allah, the Almighty, to those He chooses. Mystical enlightenment (kashf), dreams, inspiration (ilham), and various other illusions, can not serve as proofs if these are against the teachings of the Islam and shari'ah.

(d) Talismans, charms, palm reading, fortune telling, and horoscopes, as well as everything related, are practices contrary to Islam. They must be fought, including talismans and charms inscribed with verses of the Qur'an such as those compiled by Imam Hasan AI Banna, in his AI-ma'thurat.

(e) The opinions of a leader or his deputies concerning matters of public welfare (maslaha mursalah) can be acceptable if they are not in conflict with the principles of Islamic shari'ah.

(f) The sayings of any person other than the Prophet (s), may be either accepted or rejected on its merits.

(g) A Muslim whose knowledge has not reached a level of discernment sufficient to understand the reasoning behind various rules of Islamic law must follow one of the four most authoritative leaders of the Islamic law - Malik, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Abu Hanifah, and Shaf'i.

(h) Differences of opinion in minor matters of law or details of regulations should not be a reason for causing disunity in the Muslim community.

(i) To discuss theoretical issues and problems that do not benefit one' s practical life, can be categorized as unduly burdensome and is forbidden by the shari'ah.

(j) To know Allah, the Almighty, to believe in Him and not to admit any rivals to Him, constitutes the core of the Islamic creed. The verses of the Qur'an and ahadith from the Prophet (s) about the attributes of Allah must be accepted without trying unduly to put on them false interpretation, because their true meaning is beyond human experience and comprehension.

(k) All innovations (bid'ah) in the din of Allah that are baseless and have support from the Qur'an or hadith should be countered in a most intelligent way.

(l) Committing bid'ah by deliberately adding or leaving out something from formal worship is a minor problem in Islamic law.

(m) Making supplication (dua) to Allah through an intermediary (tawasul), such as a saint, is also a relatively minor problem of fiqh (Islamic law); it is not a problem of creed or aqidah.

(n) Visiting graves is a sunnah of the Prophet (s), as long as it according to his practice and teachings.

(o) To love and respect pious people because of their piety is a legitimate form of developing closeness to Allah.

(p) Wrong custom cannot legitimize bid'ah or alter the meaning of the shari'ah.

(q) Faith is the basis of worship. Worshipping internally with the mind and heart is better than worshipping externally through the body, but Islam requires both forms of worship for balance and perfection.

(r) Islam liberates the mind and encourages people to observe, analyze and understand the universe as a means to advance them in knowledge and wisdom, because Islam welcomes all useful things.

(s) Human opinion and the shari'ah may legitimately differ, but not on indubitable matters. In such cases positive assertions of law will take precedence over individual opinion. Dubious matters should be interpreted to conform with indubitable truths. Where a person's opinion differs with the shari'ah, the shari'ah must be followed until the correctness of the person's opinion is either proven or disproven.

(t) A Muslim should never be deliberately designated as a kafir (an infidel), even though he or she is a sinner, unless he or she should admit to being an unbeliever or act in a way that can not be interpreted as anything other than kufr.

2. Sincerity

   Every Muslim should aspire only to please Allah in every aspect of his life, whether in word, action, or jihad. He should not look for self-interest, respect, prestige, or title, because a Muslim believes in an ideology and a creed; he is not a fortune-hunter who merely seeks worldly gains.

3. Worship Through Action (Ibadah)

   The meaning of ibadah is to perfect oneself, to build a Muslim family, educate the community, liberate the

Muslim nation, correct a ruler until he follows Islam, regain the respect and influence of the Muslim ummah in the world community, and provide leadership by propagating the message of Islam to the ends of the earth until no trials and barriers are left, and all mankind willingly submits to its Creator, Allah.

4. Jihad

   Jihad is a continuous struggle that will last till the Day of Judgement. Failure to engage in jihad or to have no intention for it is a sure sign of jahiliyyah, as the Prophet (s), said:

   Those who die and never went to war (in the cause of Allah), nor had the intention of doing so, will die as in the state of jahiliyyah (ignorance).

5. Sacrifice

   Sacrifice for a Muslim means to sacrifice life, wealth, time, and everything in life for the sake of reaching his ultimate goal.

6. Obedience

   Obedience for a Muslim means to obey every command and implement it whether in time of happiness or hardship, and whether one likes it or not.

7. Perseverance

   A Muslim must always worship Allah and wage jihad until death in order to reach his ultimate goal, although the goal is invisible and it takes a long time to achieve. Therefore the steadfast Muslim will achieve this goal either through a lifetime of effort or through sudden death as a martyr.

8. Integrity

   This means to be true to one's self, and honest in one's thinking, to do one believes, and to refuse to compromise with what is false, whether a system or an ideology, for Islam is the most comprehensive and perfect truth. In the words of the Qur'an,

   (Our religion is) the baptism of Allah! And who can baptize better than Allah?

9. Brotherhood

   Brotherhood is to unite one's soul and spirit with one's faith and beliefs.

10. Trust

   Trust and confidence in competence, sincerity, and ability of leadership inspire feelings of love, appreciation, honor, and obedience.

2.7.5. The Responsibilities Of A Muslim Brother / Sister

In his Educational Discourse, Imam Hasan AI Banna outlined more than thirty responsibilities of a member of an Islamic movement. These responsibilities are obligations to himself or herself, family, and community. He said:

My honest brothers [and sisters], your pledge (bai'ah) requires you to carry out the following duties. Once you have done so, you will be strong and hard as a rock.

Recite the Qur'an, at least a juz (1/30 of the Qur'an) daily. You should finish a reading of the whole Qur'an in no more than a month and no less than three days.

Improve your Qur'anic recitation by listening to good reciters and taking lessons in recitation. Set aside some time to study the life-history of the Prophet (sirah), and the history of Muslims. You should read a lot of books, but a Humatul Islam is a must. Also, you should read a lot of ahadith and memorize at least forty, if possible, from the collection of Imam AI-Nawawi. Last but not least, you should study the basics of Islamic faith (aqidah), Islamic law (fiqh) and its branches.

Have a medical check-up regularly and have a doctor check any ailment. You should take care of your strength and refrain from anything that will harm your body.

Avoid excessive use of coffee, tea and other caffinated drinks, and abstain from smoking.

Practice cleanliness in every aspect of your life, e.g., house, clothing, food, body, and work place. As a matter of fact, Islam has been built on cleanliness.

Speak the truth and never lie even once.

Fulfill your promises and commitments and do not resort to lame excuses.

Be brave and wise. Bravery requires one to talk frankly about what is true and right, to keep secrets, to admit one's faults, to be aware of oneself, and to keep oneself from getting angry.

Be serious but your seriousness should not stop you from enjoying jokes and laughing.

Be modest, careful, and sensitive to good and bad things by expressing your happiness when experiencing good and gratitude when encountering bad. You should ask for a less prominent position, although you deserve or have a higher one.

Be fair in judging according to sound evidence. Your anger should not make you ignore the good in others and your blessings should not make you forget the bad in others. You should speak the truth even to yourself and to your closest friends, even though it may be painful to do so.

Be active in community service. You should be happy when you have a chance to help others by visiting a sick person, helping the needy, and offering charity.

Exhibit sympathy, generosity, and forgiveness. You

should be tolerant, flexible, and gentle. You should be kind to human beings and animals, have good relations with the community, preserve the courtesies of Islam, be gentle when talking with young people, respect elders, give up a seat to those who need it more, respect others privacy, and neither condemn nor insult others.

Improve your reading and writing skills; increase your knowledge of the Islamic movement [The original reads: Ikhwan Muslimin (or Muslim Brotherhood).] by reading about it. Read newspapers and magazines. You should have a personal library even if it is a small one. You must increase your knowledge both generally and in your specially if you have one. You must be able to understand the problems concerning Muslims in sufficient depth to develop your own solutions in accordance with our ideology.

Work to earn money no matter how rich you are. Give priority to ordinary jobs even though their pay is small, and also give your full attention to this kind of job no matter how high your qualifications are.

Do not work in the government, but do not reject an offer of work in the government, even though the pay is poor, and do not quit unless the work is against Islam.

If you are given a job, work wholeheartedly, and honestly.

Demand and respect the rights of your brother and yourself.

Avoid gambling and unlawful sources of income.

Do not take interest (riba) in any, dealings and you must avoid the circumstances that may lead to it.

Contribute to the material gains encouraged by Islam by promoting private industry, especially Muslim-owned and employee-owned enterprises.

Support da'wah by contributing some of your wealth to the Islamic movement. You must pay the minimally established amount of zakat on your assets because this is the right of those who should receive it.

Keep a small amount of your income for emergency use. Never overspend on luxury goods.

Strive as far as you can to keep alive the beneficial practices of true Islamic culture and eliminate secular culture in your daily conduct. Some of these practices are to greet everyone with salaam, speak the Arabic language, read the sirah, wear modest clothing, maintain regular hours of work, and rest, observe the rules of eating and drinking, and follow the etiquettes of visiting, in accordance with the sunnah of the Prophet (s).

Avoid all newspapers, magazines, clubs, gatherings, and schools that oppose the principles of Islam, unless your reading and activities in such prohibited institutions are designed only to promote the good and oppose the bad.

Always remember Allah, the Almighty, and the Day of judgement. You should look for every means to seek the blessing of Allah, the Almighty, with high spirit and selfesteem. You should always seek to be closer to Allah through voluntary prayer such as night prayer (qiyam al-layl), and fasting at least three days a month. You should use the supplications of the Prophet, (s).

When you clean yourself, always follow the rules and regulations. Always maintain wudu (ablution).

When you perform the daily prayers, do so on time, and always fulfill the rules. Pray in congregation and at the mosques as much as possible.

Observe the fast of Ramadan and go on the hajj as soon as you have the means.

Regularly make the intention to go on jihad with the ambition to die as a martyr. You should be ready for this right now, even though its time may not have come yet.

Regularly renew your repentance, ask for Allah's forgiveness, and avoid every kind of sin. You should set aside a special time to evaluate yourself before going to bed every night. Always keep track of your time because time means life. Do not misuse your time. Always fear Allah guarding yourself against evil, and keeping away from dubious things so as not to fall into doing the unlawful (haram) things.

Avoid lustful thoughts, emotions, and occasions of sin, for example, by restraining your gaze from haram things, urging your emotions to focus on good deeds, and keeping your heart and desires away from all that is forbidden.

Do not eat or socialize where alcohol is used and consumed.

Do not take immoral people as friends and avoid all places that may lead to sin, such as bars.

Avoid all evil forms and places of entertainment, and in general, avoid the environment of arrogant and extravagant luxury.

Get to know every member of your Movement by introducing yourself to those you do not know. Fulfill the rights of brotherhood as much as you can by showing love and appreciation, by mutual help and giving preference to others and by attending the movement's gatherings wherever possible.

Dissociate yourself from every gathering or organization that opposes your ideological standpoint, especially when the Movement asks you to do so.

Spread the message of Islam everywhere you go. Keep the leadership informed about all you see that is relevant to its mission, and avoid any actions that might hurt or weaken your leaders and the movement. Always maintain good relations with your direct superior in the leadership. Regard yourself as a soldier in battle ready to go on duty at any time.

Make frequent use of the following supplication known as the wird al rabitah (or supplication of commitment). First, read the following verse carefully: Say: O Allah! Lord of Power (and Rule), You give power to whom You please, and You strip off power from whom You please. You endow with honor whom You please, and You bring

low whom You please. In Your hand is all good. Verily, over all things You have power. You cause the night to gain on the day, and You cause the day to gain on the night. You bring the living out of dead, and You bring the dead out of the living, and You give sustenance to whom You please, without measure. [Qur'an 3:26-27]

Then say the following supplication:

O Allah, this is the arrival of Your night and the departure of Your day. Please forgive me.

After that bring to mind the face of your closest brother and try to feel a spiritual relationship between you and him and with others whom you do not know, and make the following supplication:

O Allah, indeed you know that these souls have agreed to love you, to obey you, to cooperate in spreading Your message, and have promised to support and apply your law (shari'ah). O Allah, strengthen our relationship, make our love last, and show us the right way. Fulfill these souls with Your light that never diminishes, expand our souls with the blessings of faith in You, for in You we believe. Enlighten these souls with Your understanding and let us die as martyrs by fighting in Your cause, for indeed You are the best Protector and Helper. O Allah, fulfill these requests, bestow Your blessings and peace on Prophet Muhammad (s), and his family, and his companions. [Imam Hasan AI-Banna Risalat Ta'alim]

2.7.6. The Responsibilities of Brotherhood

In Islam, faith or aqidah is the core of brotherhood. it keeps Muslims close to each other in a fraternal relationship. This relationship is based on each brother's submission to the Lord, the Almighty, and on their mutual efforts to be closer to Him. Islamic brotherhood is a bond of faith as mentioned in the following saying of the Prophet (s):

The strongest relationship is built on loving for the sake of Allah and becoming angry for the sake of Allah. [Narrated by Ahmad]

Brotherhood in Islam strengthens the process of building a Muslim community and keeps Muslims close to each other. An Islamic movement based on true brotherhood is as solid as concrete and functions with organic unity as a body that feels the pain when any of its part suffers.

In order to ensure that brotherhood can play this role in the Muslim Movement, Islam has laid down specific duties and rights of practicing brotherhood. These are given below to show that these duties and rights are not theoretical but are real and true duties and responsibilities:

1. Brotherhood must be able to help each brother obey Allah, the Almighty, and accept the teachings of the Prophet (s), who said:

   Those whom Allah wishes to be given good deeds, Allah will sustain them by a pious Muslim friend. if he forgets, (to do good deeds] his friend will remind him, and when his friend reminds him, he will help his friend.

   'Umar AI Khattab, said: "Seek out trustworthy brothers and live in their community, because they are the embellishers during happiness and suppliers in hardship."

2. Brotherhood is a spiritual bond that helps a person feel the needs of his brother and cooperate with him in fulfilling those needs, as indicated by the Prophet (s):

   If one of you goes with your brother to help him fulfill his duty, and then the Prophet (s), made a sign with his fingers, added: 'That is better for him than making i'tikaf [staying in the mosque for worship] in my mosque for two months. [Narrated by AI Hakim]

3. Brotherhood gives rise to cooperation also in a material sense, as the Prophet (s) said:

   Those who help a Muslim in hardship in this world, will be protected by Allah from suffering hardship in the Hereafter. Those who help the unfortunate, Allah will help them both in this world and in the Hereafter. Those who keep the secrets of a Muslim in this world, will have their secrets kept by Allah in this world and in the Hereafter. Allah will help His servants as long as they help their fellow Muslim brothers.[Narrated by Muslim, Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah]

4. Brotherhood is a communal responsibility with many duties. The most important of these is referted to in the following baditb:

   There are six duties of a Muslim to another Muslim: When you meet him, you should say salaam (give salutations). When he invites you, you should accept his invitation. When he advises you, you should also advise him. When he sneezes and says, "Alhamdulillah," [All praise to Allah], you should say, "Yarbamukallah". When he is sick, you should visit him. And when he passes away, you should accompany his dead body to the cemetery. [Narrated by Muslim]

5. Brotherhood in Islam means caring, loving, and cooperating with one another. In this context, the Prophet (s), said:

   Do not end a friendship, do not turn your back, do not hate each other, and do not envy each other. As a servant of Allah, maintain brotherhood. Two Muslims may not remain on non-speaking terms with each other for more than three days. [Narrated by Malik, Bulchari, Abu Da'ud, Tirmidhi, and Nasa'i]

In another tradition, the Prophet said:

Do not downgrade a good deed. Even (an apparently insignificant thing like) looking at your (Muslim) brother with a pleasant smile, is a good deed. [Narrated by Muslim]

The Prophet (s) said:

Every good deed is a charity and indeed charity is meeting your brother with a pleasant smile and pouring water from a kettle into his glass. [Narrated by Tirmidhi]

The Prophet (s), also said:

Exchange gifts, so that you will love each other and the enmity between you and others will vanish. [Bulchari & Muslim]

6. Brotherhood in Islam implies loyalty and truthfulness. The Prophet (s) said in one of his traditions:

   If one defends the honor of his fellow Muslim brother, Allah, the Almighty, will keep the Hellfire away from his face in the Hereafter. [Narrated by Tirmidhi]

   The Prophet, peace be upon him, also said:

   The supplication of a Muslim for his brother without his knowledge is an accepted supplication and will be rewarded by the presence of an angel at his side. Every time he supplicates for his brother, the angel will say: Amen, and the same for you too. [Narrated by Muslim]